TRUE CRIME

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC

NO. 14

OCT.-NOV.

CRIME PATROL

AUTHORIZED A.C.M.P. CONFORMS to the COMICS CODE

10¢

REAL STORIES FROM POLICE RECORDS!

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Accurate, hard-hitting low in price. Everyone who has owned a Daisy knows what a terrific thrill this hard hitting full-powered Daisy gun can give for target and outdoor shooting. Blued steel finish, natural hardwood stock, 31 inches long. Large, single stroke compression chamber. Individual colorful target box. POSTPAID..... $2.59
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Daisy 1000 Shot Red Ryder
Famous hard-hitting rifle! amazingly accurate. Fires up to 30 shots per minute. Single pump action. Blued steel with lacquered gold band. Leather Sling. 36-in. long; 54½ lbs. Loads in 5 seconds. Complete with sling, of shot, targets and shooter's badge. POSTPAID $5.50

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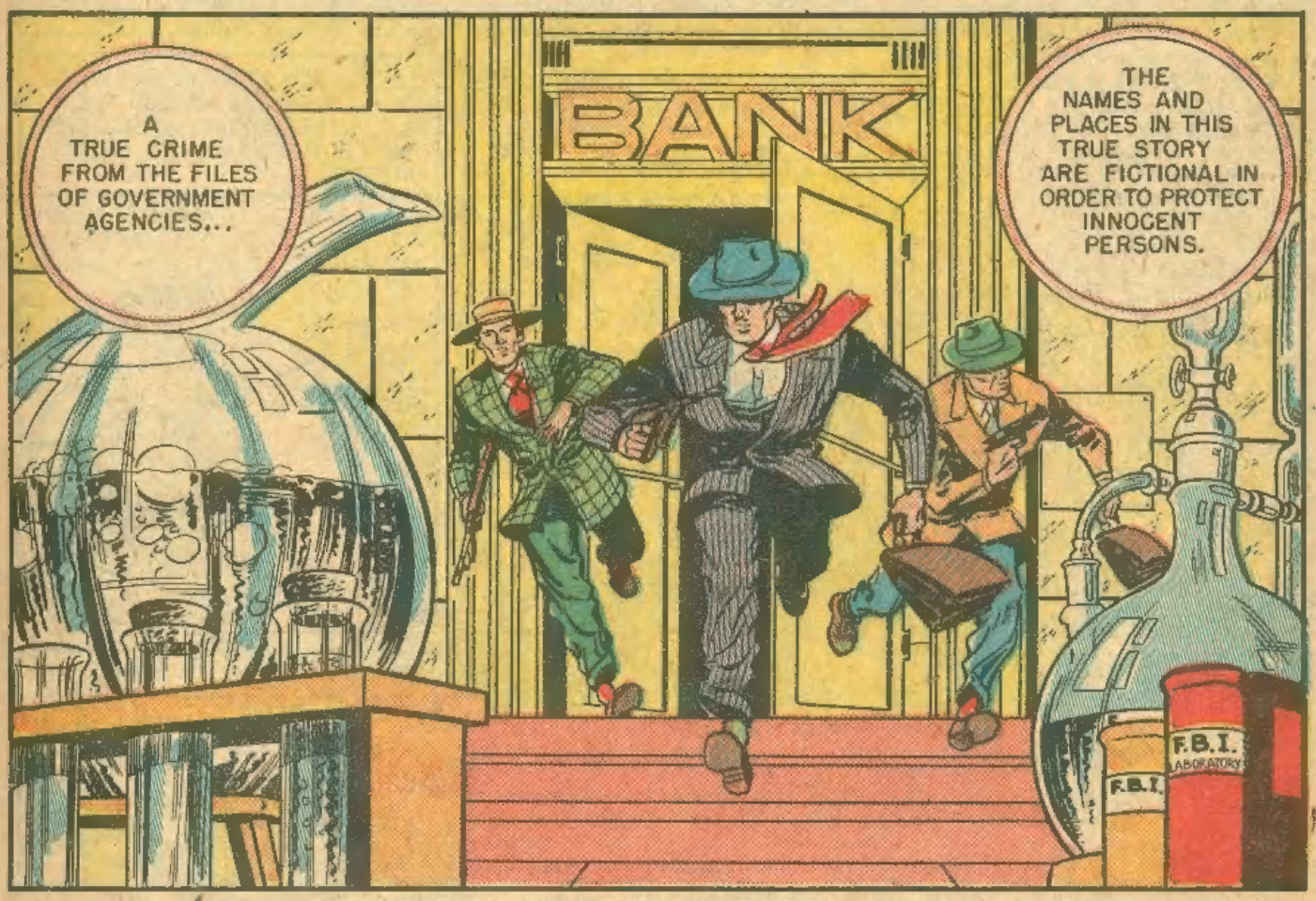
THREE CLUES TO TERROR



ON A HOT JULY AFTERNOON IN THE LATE THIRTIES, THE LITTLE TOWN OF HARKER FALLS, INDIANA, WAS ROUSED BY THE BLASTING CHATTER OF TOMMYGUNS AS THE MAD-MAN GANG MADE A GETAWAY WITH TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS---

AND LIKE AN ECHO FROM A VALLEY, THOSE TOMMYGUNS SET IN MOTION ONE OF THE GRIMMEST GOVERNMENT MANHUNTS OF ALL TIME AS POLICE FORCES AND FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION THREW THEMSELVES INTO AN ALL-OUT EFFORT! THEY HAD LITTLE TO GO ON. THREE THINGS AS FAINT AS THE BREEZE IN THE SKY: THE FLIGHT OF AN AIRPLANE IN THE SKY, THE COLOR OF A THREAD, AND THE MARK OF A TIRE IN THE DUST!

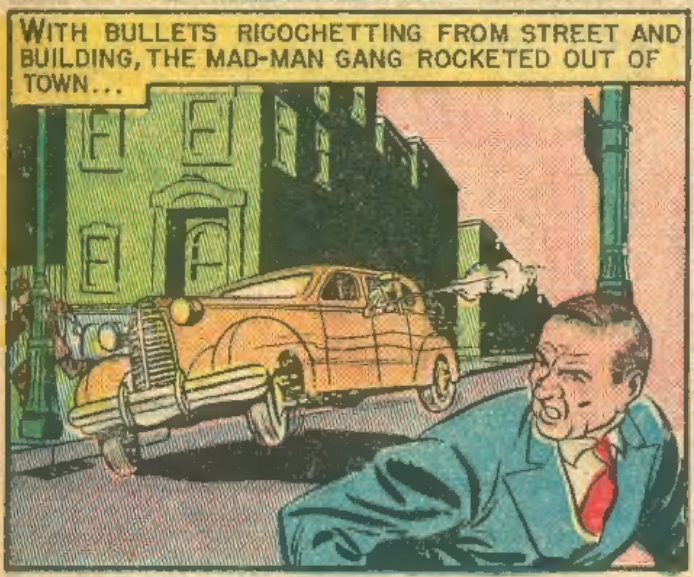
JOHNNY CRAIG

IT WAS THE DAY AFTER THE HARKER FALLS BANK ROBBERY THAT CONSTABLE JOE DANIELS ENTERED HIS POLICE STATION WITH A PLASTER CAST...
GOT THE PLASTER MARKS OF THEIR TIRES, BILL.
OH? AND WHAT GOOD WILL THEY DO? MIGHT AS WELL FIND OUT WHAT KIND OF GASOLINE THEY USE!
MAYBE IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD, THEN MAYBE IT WILL. I'M GOING TO SEND THIS TO THE F.B.I. LABORATORIES! THEIR EXPERTS ARE AT THE SERVICE OF LOCAL POLICE FORCES, YOU KNOW.
CONSTABLE DANIELS WENT TO THE F.B.I. LABORATORIES WITH HIS PRECIOUS TIRE. AT THE LABORATORY...
I THINK THAT WE CAN RECONSTRUCT THE CRIME, CONSTABLE.
I DO, TOO, SIR. WE HAVE THIS CAST AND A FINGER MARK ON THE MARBLE COUNTER OF THE BANK TO GO BY. THE PRINT IS SMUDGED, BUT WE DON'T NEED THAT.
THE MAD-MAN GANG STOPPED AT A RESTAURANT DOWN THE STREET FROM THE BANK. AT TWO MINUTES AFTER TWELVE, THEY ENTERED THE BANK...
NOT MANY IN HERE AT LUNCH TIME. OPEN THE BAG!
RIGHT! I'LL TAKE THE GUARD.
I'LL HANDLE THE TELLERS!
THEIR GUNS WERE IN THE VALISE. AS THEY STRODE ACROSS THE FLOOR, THE GANGSTERS SNATCHED THEM OUT AND SNARLED THEIR ORDERS...
DON'T MAKE A MOVE, GUARD, AN' YOU WON'T GET HURT!
WHY, YOU CHEAP YELLOW CROOK! I—
GUARD
TRYIN' TO BE A HERO, HUH? HERE'S WHAT YOU HEROES GET!
THOSE DIRTY KILLERS SHOT THE GUARD DOWN—AND LAUGHED!
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
GUARD

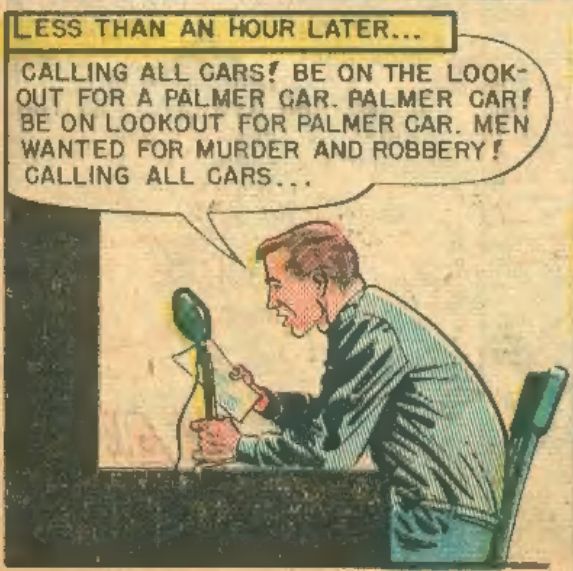
HURRY UP, SPORT! WE AIN'T GOT ALL DAY.
THERE'S A LOT OF DOUGH HERE, CHUCK. IT TAKES TIME—

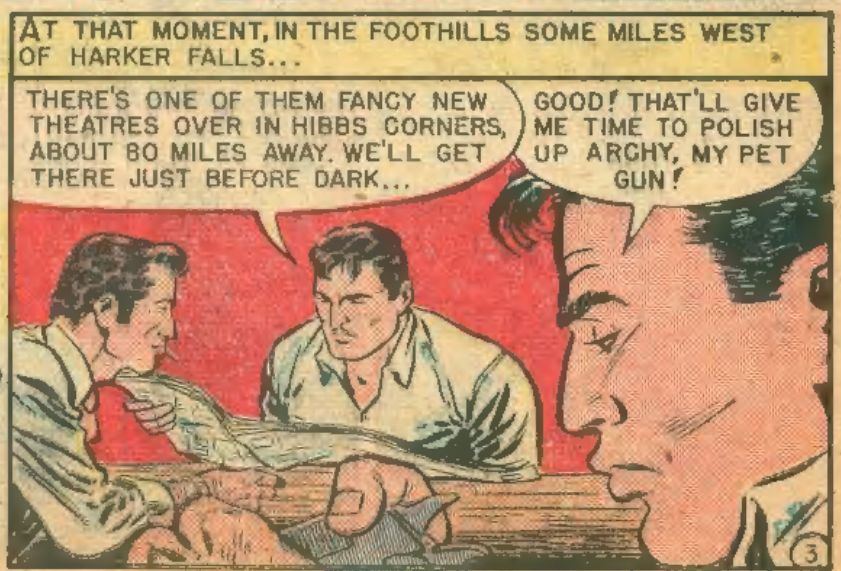
AT THAT MOMENT A PASSING CIVILIAN, WHO WAS ENTERING THE BANK TO MAKE A DEPOSIT, GAVE THE ALARM...
A BANK ROBBERY! CALL THE POLICE!

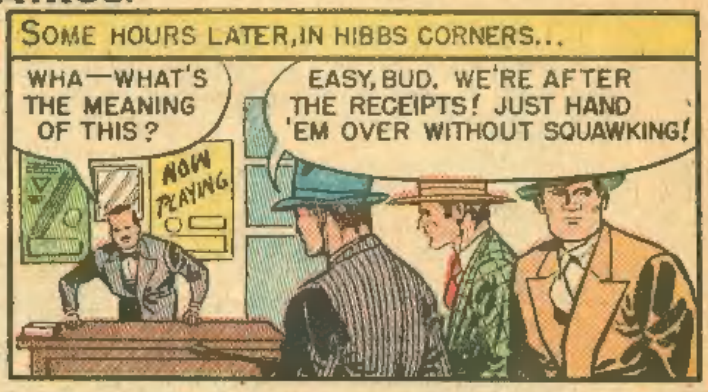
ONE OF THE RATS SAW HIM AND BLASTED WITH HIS TOMMYGUN JUST AS THE PASSERBY WOULD HAVE REACHED SAFETY...
TIME TO BLOW! THIS WHOLE TOWN WILL BE ON OUR NECKS!
GO AHEAD— I WANT TO GET THE GUY THAT GAVE THE ALARM!


WITH BULLETS RICOCHETTING FROM STREET AND BUILDING, THE MAD-MAN GANG ROCKETED OUT OF TOWN...

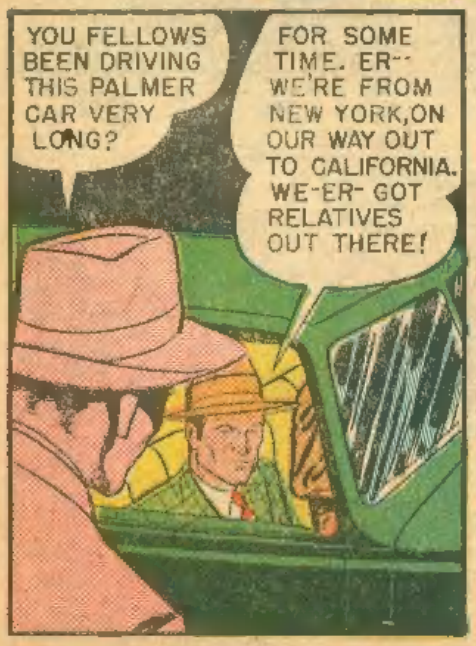
AND THAT'S THE STORY OF THE HARKER FALLS BANK ROBBERY!
I SEE... HMMM, HERE'S THE REPORT ON THAT TIRE MARK. IT SEEMS IT'S A SPECIAL TIRE, USED ON A PALMER CAR!


LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER...
CALLING ALL CARS! BE ON THE LOOK-OUT FOR A PALMER CAR. PALMER CAR! BE ON LOOKOUT FOR PALMER CAR. MEN WANTED FOR MURDER AND ROBBERY! CALLING ALL CARS...

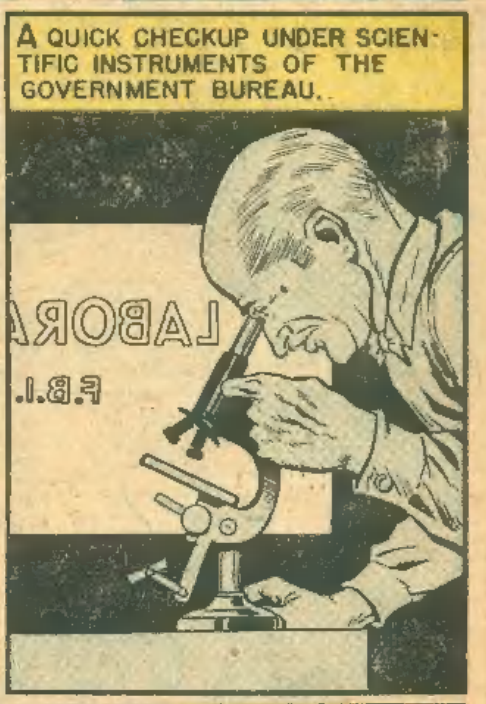

AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE FOOTHILLS SOME MILES WEST OF HARKER FALLS...
THERE'S ONE OF THEM FANCY NEW THEATRES OVER IN HIBBS CORNERS, ABOUT 80 MILES AWAY. WE'LL GET THERE JUST BEFORE DARK...
GOOD! THAT'LL GIVE ME TIME TO POLISH UP ARCHY, MY PET GUN!

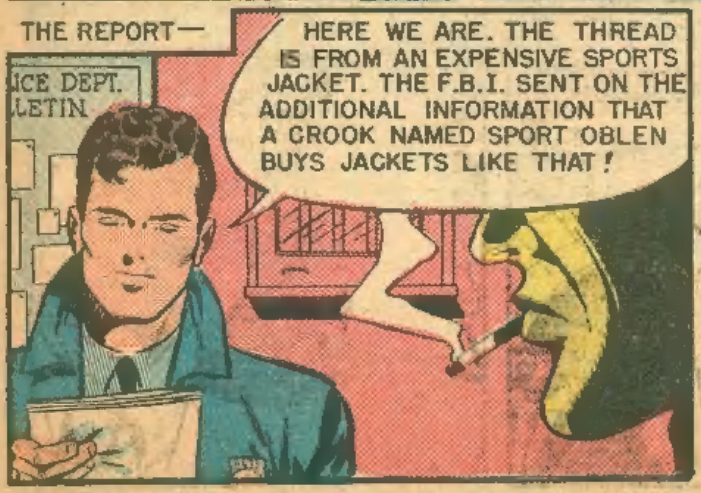


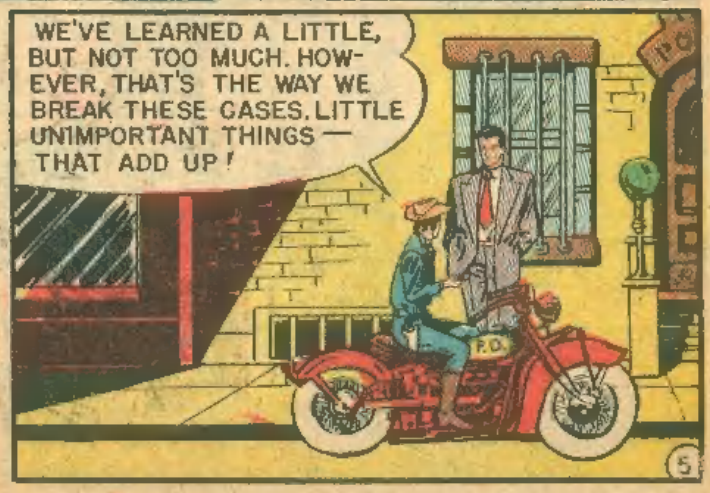
AS THE KILLERS WALKED FROM THE THEATRE, THEY SAW A MAN STARING HARD AT THEIR CAR...



TWO HOURS LATER, CONSTABLE JOE DANIELS MET DETECTIVE ORVAL HECKER...



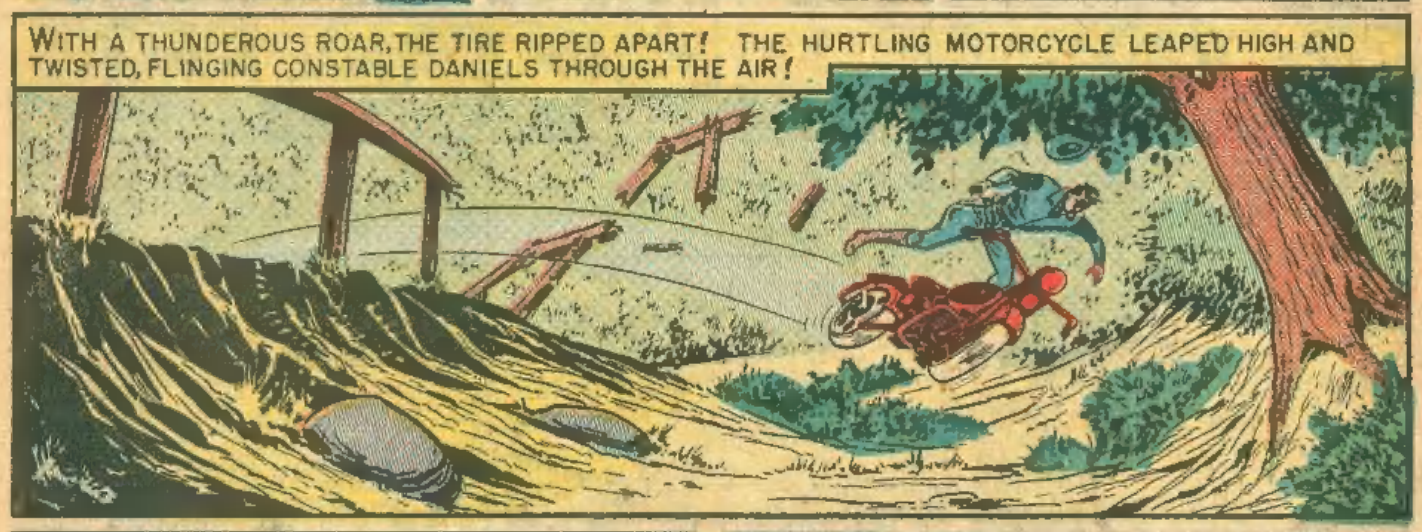




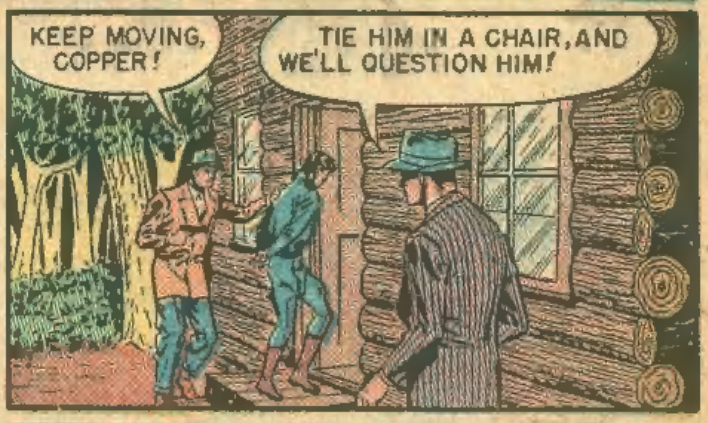
A LITTLE DISTANCE OUTSIDE HARKER FALLS...
THAT FELLOW IS MOVING AT A PRETTY GOOD CLIP... HEY! THAT'S A *PALMER* CAR!

A COPPER FOLLOWING US!
BLAST HIS FRONT TIRE!

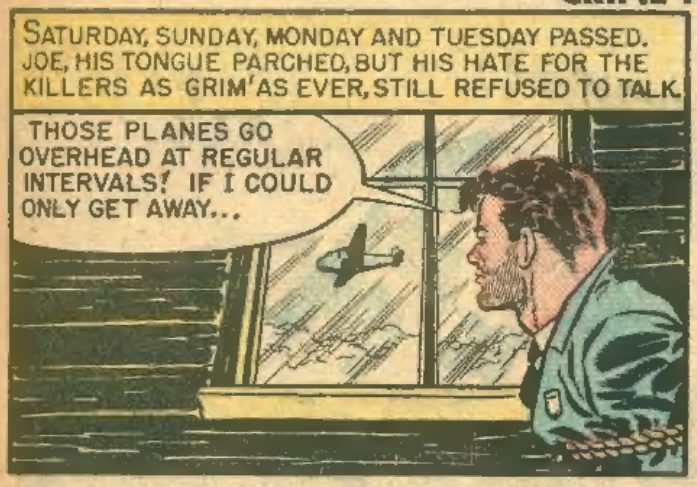
I'M JUST... MISSING WITH A LITTLE LUCK... I'LL HIT THAT TIRE!


WITH A THUNDEROUS ROAR, THE TIRE RIPPED APART! THE HURTLING MOTORCYCLE LEAPED HIGH AND TWISTED, FLINGING CONSTABLE DANIELS THROUGH THE AIR!

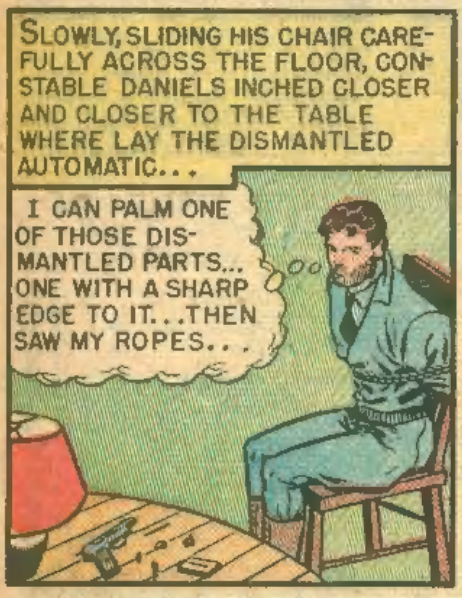
PICK HIM UP AN' PUT HIM IN THE CAR! I WANT TO KNOW JUST HOW MUCH THE COPS HAVE GOT ON US!
HEY, THAT'S PRETTY SMART THINKING, BOB!


KEEP MOVING, COPPER!
TIE HIM IN A CHAIR, AND WE'LL QUESTION HIM!

YOU WON'T LEARN ANYTHING FROM *ME!* ALL I'LL TELL YOU IS THAT WE'LL CATCH UP TO YOU ONE OF THESE DAYS!
YOU'LL *TALK.* YOU'LL STAY TIED UP WITHOUT FOOD OR WATER UNTIL *YOU DO!*


SATURDAY, SUNDAY, MONDAY AND TUESDAY PASSED. JOE, HIS TONGUE PARCHED, BUT HIS HATE FOR THE KILLERS AS GRIM AS EVER, STILL REFUSED TO TALK.
THOSE PLANES GO OVERHEAD AT REGULAR INTERVALS! IF I COULD ONLY GET AWAY...

I NEED A LITTLE AIR. THAT COPPER CAN'T GET FREE...SO I'LL TAKE A WALK.


SLOWLY, SLIDING HIS CHAIR CAREFULLY ACROSS THE FLOOR, CONSTABLE DANIELS INCHED CLOSER AND CLOSER TO THE TABLE WHERE LAY THE DISMANTLED AUTOMATIC...
I CAN PALM ONE OF THOSE DISMANTLED PARTS... ONE WITH A SHARP EDGE TO IT...THEN SAW MY ROPES...

PATIENTLY, WORKING WITH DESPERATE FURY, CONSTABLE DANIELS SLOWLY HACKED AND CUT HIS ROPES. HE WAS JUST LEAPING TOWARD FREEDOM WHEN CHUCK ENTERED THE DOOR...
HEY! COME BACK HERE!
SO LONG, CHUM!

ONCE I'M OUT OF THIS CABIN, THEY'LL NEVER GET ME... IF I CAN HELP IT!

TWISTING AND DODGING THROUGH THE UNDERBRUSH, THE YOUNG POLICEMAN THREW HIS ENTIRE BODY INTO HIS GREAT FLIGHT FOR HIS LIFE...
THEY'RE RIGHT BEHIND ME. IF THEY GET A SHOT AT ME— IT'LL BE CURTAINS! BUT IF I CAN KEEP A LITTLE AHEAD OF THEM, THERE'S A FOREST RANGER PHONE NOT FAR AWAY!

THAT'S RIGHT! SOMEWHERE ON THE ROUTE OF THE TRANSMOUNTAIN AIRLINE SERVICE! TELL THEM TO CHECK THEIR FLIGHTS FOR THESE TIMES....

SECONDS LATER, THE FULL FORCES OF THE LAW WENT INTO ACTION...

BUT NOT KNOWING THAT HELP WAS ON THE WAY, CONSTABLE DANIELS STILL STRUGGLED THROUGH THE UNDERBRUSH...

THEY AREN'T FAR BEHIND ME NOW. THEY'LL START SHOOTING SOON!

I CAN HOLD THEM OFF A LITTLE LONGER BY WALKING IN THE WATER. I WON'T LEAVE ANY FOOTPRINTS, THIS WAY!

MEANWHILE, THE FOREST RANGER HAS SENT OUT WORD TO HIS FIELD MEN...

FROM THIS HEIGHT, I CAN DIRECT THE POLICE WHEN THEY MOVE IN...

HIGH OVERHEAD, A POLICE HELICOPTER CIRCLES...

WHILE ON THE GROUND, GRIM-FACED POLICEMEN CLOSE IN WITH DRAWN GUNS...

DON'T TAKE ANY CHANCES WITH THOSE CRAZY KILLERS! IF THEY SHOW FIGHT--SHOOT TO KILL!

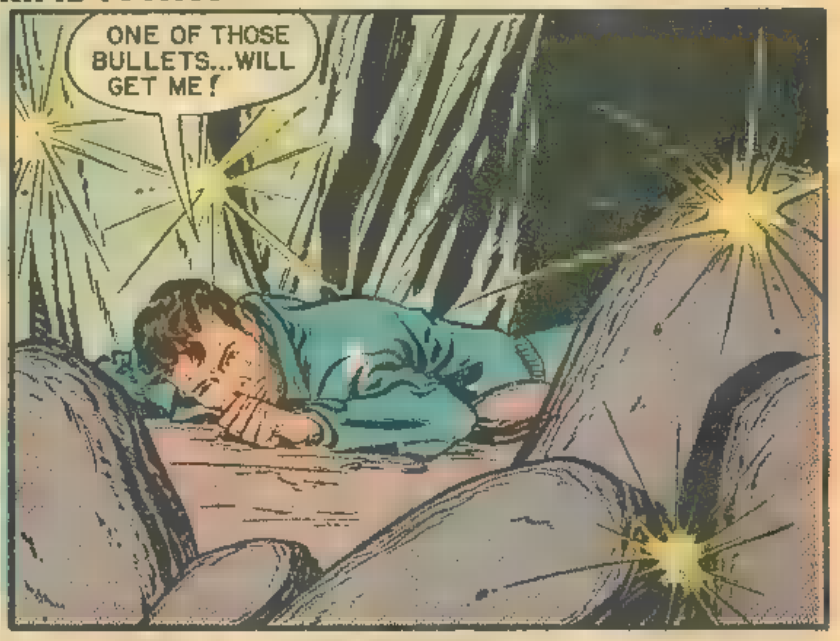
THEY DON'T DESERVE A CHANCE TO SURRENDER, BUT WE'LL GIVE THEM ONE.

SOMEWHERE INSIDE THE POLICE DRAGNET—

THEY'VE SEEN ME! THEY'RE GOING TO— SHOOT!

HE'S LIKE A SITTIN' DUCK UP THERE! BRING HIM DOWN!

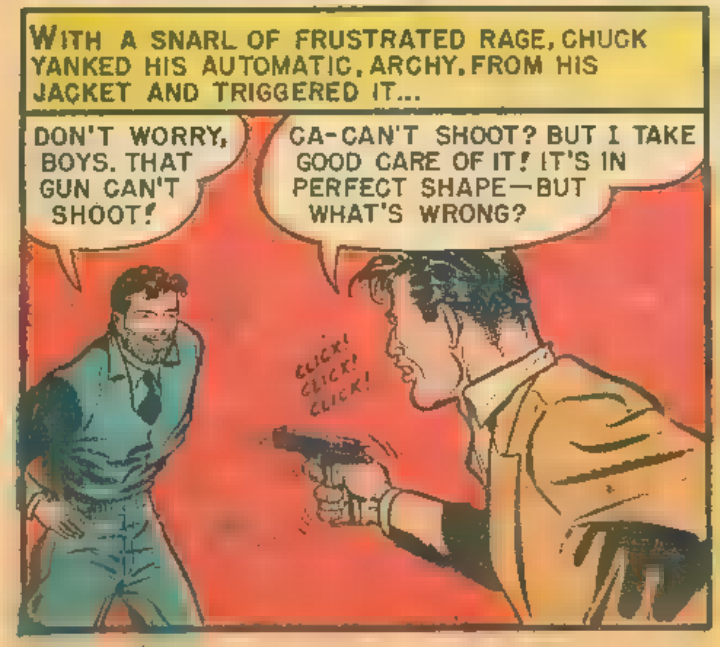
LISTEN! TOMMYGUN FIRE! THOSE DIRTY RATS MUST HAVE JOE CORNERED! IF THEY KILL HIM, WE'LL TEAR THEM APART!
I'LL SLIP THE DOGS. THEY'LL GET TO THEM BEFORE WE WILL!

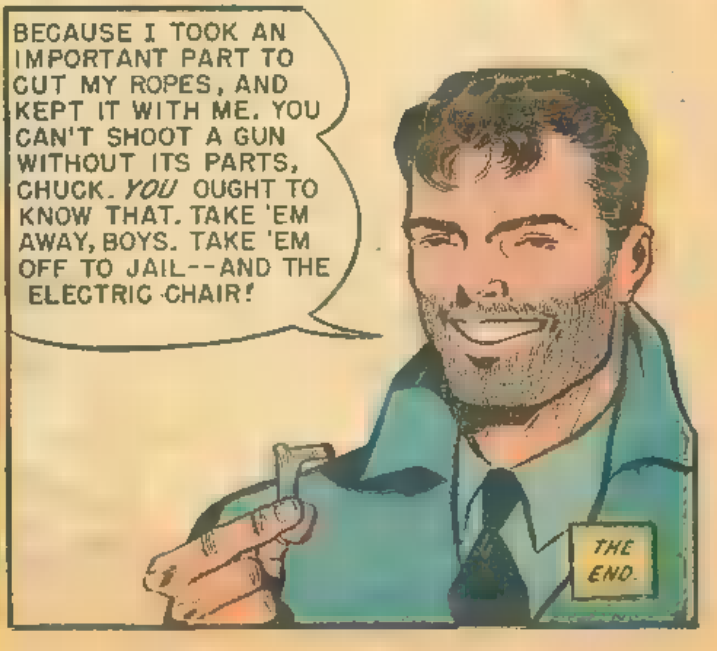

ONE OF THOSE BULLETS...WILL GET ME!

WITH SLAVERING JAWS, THE FIERCE POLICE DOGS LEAPED AT THE STARTLED KILLERS...
NO! NO!
WE GOTTA SCRAM! THE COPPERS AIN'T FAR BEHIND THEM DOGS!

THAT'S THE FIRST HONEST THING YOU'VE SAID IN YEARS, KILLINGER!
GET 'EM UP— AND KEEP 'EM UP!

YOU CAME JUST TIME, BOYS. WE'LL FIND ALL THE EVIDENCE WE NEED TO CONVICT THEM IN THAT CABIN. MOREOVER, I CAN ALWAYS TESTIFY AGAINST THEM.
SO YOU'RE GONNA TESTIFY, ARE YOU?

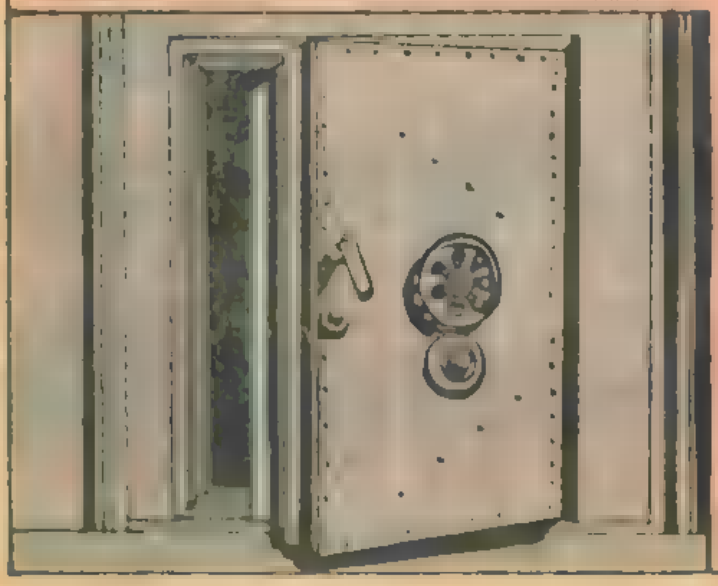

WITH A SNARL OF FRUSTRATED RAGE, CHUCK YANKED HIS AUTOMATIC, ARCHY, FROM HIS JACKET AND TRIGGERED IT...
DON'T WORRY, BOYS. THAT GUN CAN'T SHOOT!
CA-CAN'T SHOOT? BUT I TAKE GOOD CARE OF IT! IT'S IN PERFECT SHAPE—BUT WHAT'S WRONG?
CLICK! CLICK! CLICK!


BECAUSE I TOOK AN IMPORTANT PART TO CUT MY ROPES, AND KEPT IT WITH ME. YOU CAN'T SHOOT A GUN WITHOUT ITS PARTS, CHUCK. YOU OUGHT TO KNOW THAT. TAKE 'EM AWAY, BOYS. TAKE 'EM OFF TO JAIL--AND THE ELECTRIC CHAIR!
THE END.

INSIDE JOB!

As soon as the salesman had left his office, Walter Mark, President of the First Federal Bank, telephoned Police Headquarters. He was quickly connected with Inspector Binder, to whom he mentioned his suspicions.

"This fellow came in just a few minutes ago," Mark said into the telephone. "Not the usual salesman sent to us by the National Safety Vault people, either. A man I'd never seen before . . . seemed to know all about what we needed down here at the bank, though! Seems we've had a little trouble with the Safety Vault we purchased a month ago . . . I wrote to the National people and asked them to please send a representative down to the bank to change the combination of the lock on the vault. And this fellow showed up in response to my letter. What made it seem curious to me is that I dictated the letter to Jim Yancy, my assistant, only yesterday afternoon . . and I was surprised to find that National had received the letter and dispatched a man so soon And I've got to admit that my eyebrows must have gone up a couple of times during the conversation . . for this fellow asked some very indiscreet questions about what we had in the vault at the moment . the sort of questions that National Vault representatives NEVER ask! To get along with the story though . . . this guy changed the combination in the lock for me . . and then I noticed that he lingered on the way out of the bank. Thought I'd ask your advice . . . frankly, I'm a little worried . . . like to have you look up this fellow. Name's Morgan . . . staying at the Wilshire, he said!"



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The two police officers in plain-clothes exchanged glances of a significant nature. The young fellow who had crossed the lobby to the desk of the Hotel Wilshire had plainly asked to be shown up to Mr. Morgan's room. No doubt about it. A visitor for a man who had never been to Center City! And the visitor . . . was Jim Yancy!

Jim Yancy looked at his wristwatch. It was 11:30. He beckoned to the man at his side and together they moved across the lobby of the bank. The only illumination was the small flashlight carried in the hand of the stranger.

"The vault room's in here, Morgan," said Jim Yancy.

The stranger knelt beside the steel door while Yancy stood behind him, the thin ribbon of light focused on the dials near the massive handle. Morgan twirled the knob first this way, then that. A slight clicking sound was heard . . . then a grin flashed over Morgan's face. He stood up, turned the handle on the bank-vault door . . . and the steel portal swung open.

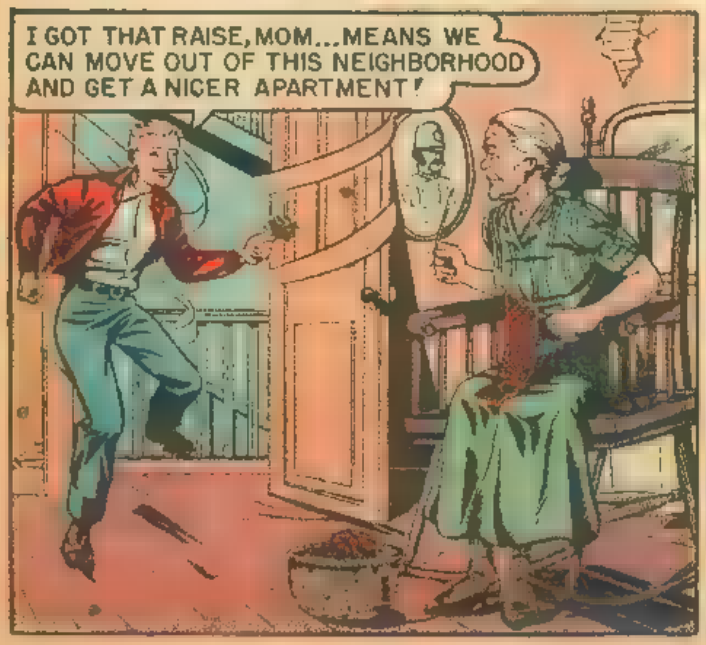
"There it is," said Morgan, stepping into the vault. "Nice to have you to intercept letters to the Vault people . . . and me to arrive in time to fix the combination so that we can re-enter the vault after everyone's left the bank! Only way to rob a bank . . . gotta be an inside job!"

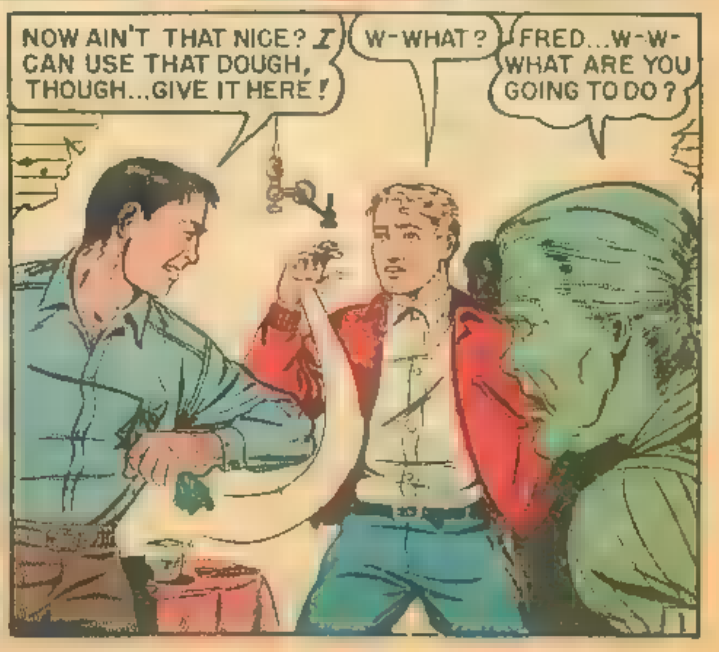
"Certainly does," said Inspector Binder, the light in his hand flaring up suddenly, as he and several uniformed police leaped across the vault, from the recess in which they had been standing. "We've been waiting inside the vault for you and your confederate, Jim Yancy, to show up tonight! And when you opened this vault . . . you walked right into the trap . . . the vault itself! Certainly was an INSIDE JOB . . for the Police!"

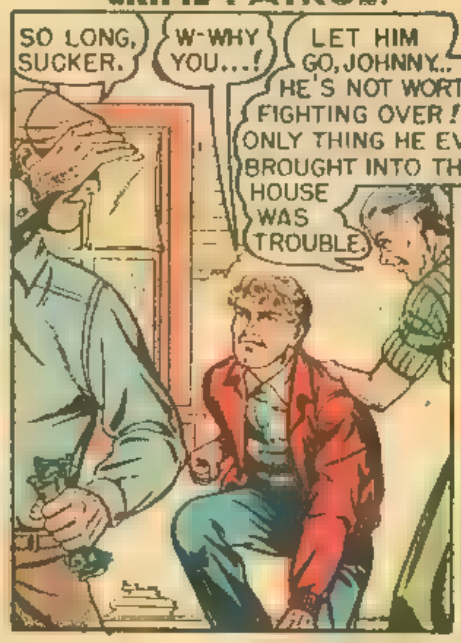
The Max BROTHERS

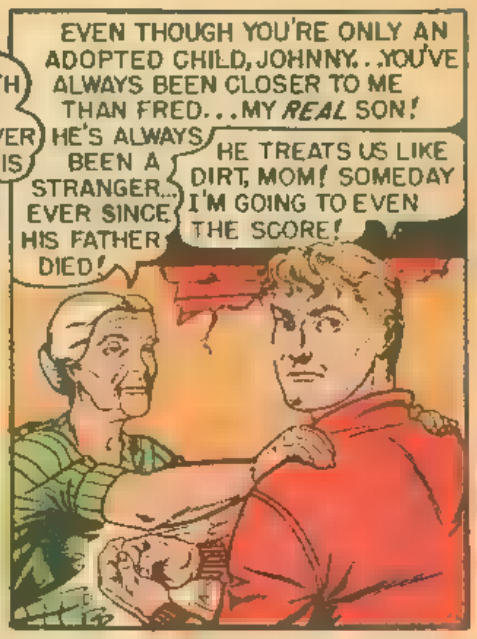
THOUGH FRED AND JOHNNY MAXWELL WERE STEP-BROTHERS, THEY WERE AS FAR APART AS THE TWO POLES OF THE EARTH! FOR JOHNNY JOINED THE POLICE FORCE AND BECAME A DEFENDER OF LAW AND ORDER... WHILE FRED MAXWELL GRAVITATED TOWARD THE UNDERWORLD AND A LIFE OF VIOLENCE AND CRIME! AND BECAUSE THEIR PATHS CROSSED IN THE MIDST OF FRED'S WAR AGAINST SOCIETY, A SHOW-DOWN WAS INEVITABLE... AS IT ALWAYS IS WHEN CRIME FIGHTS THE LAW, OR WHEN...

"BROTHER BATTLES BROTHER"

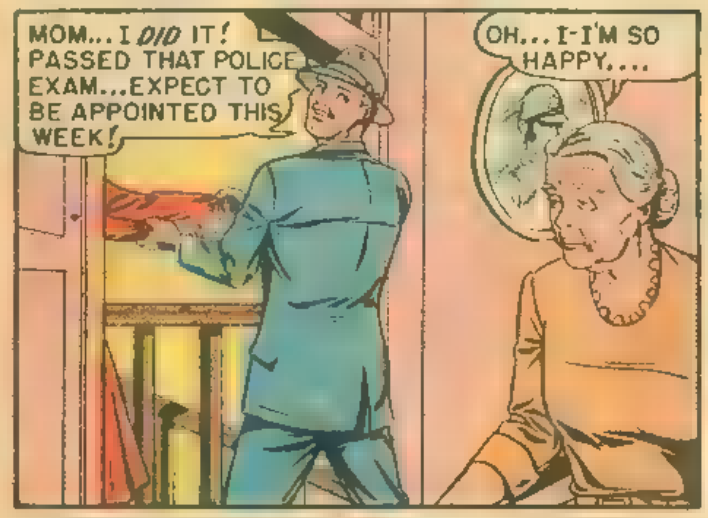


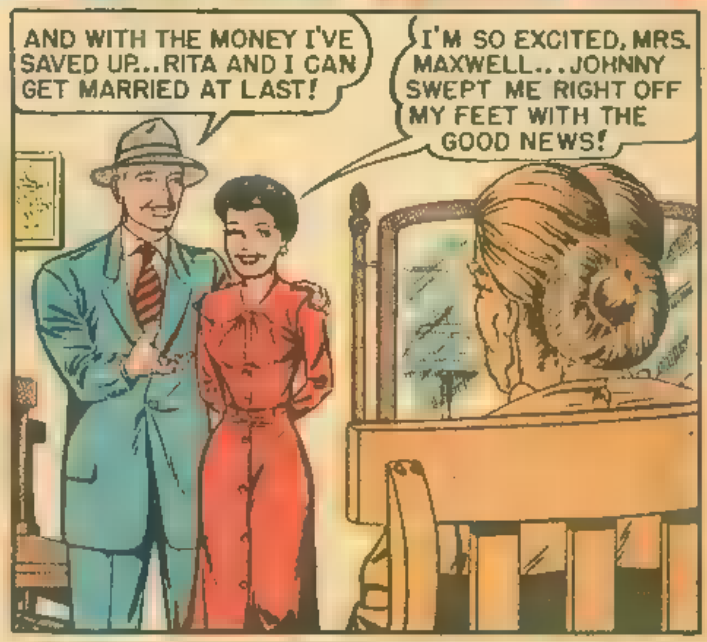


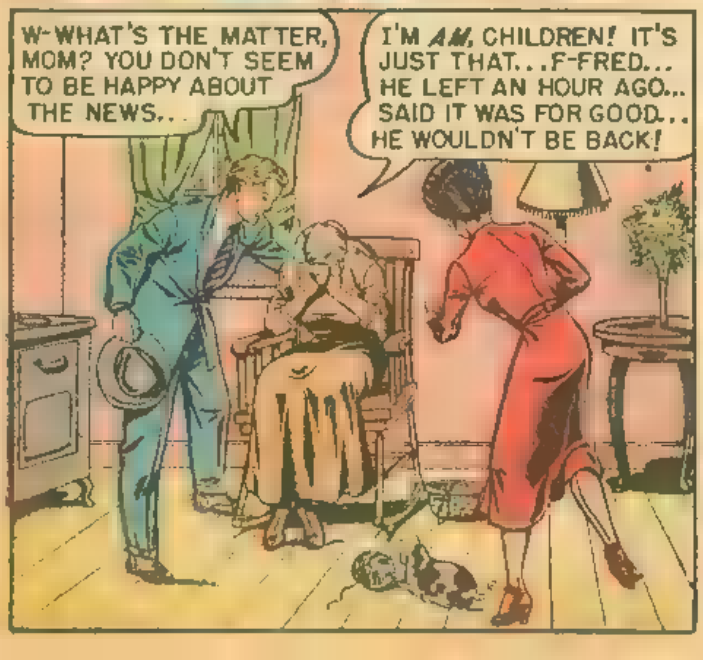


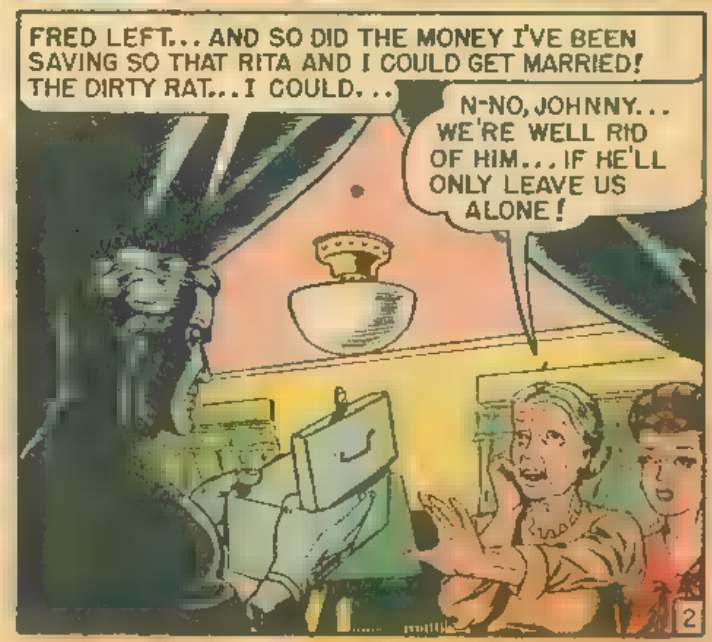


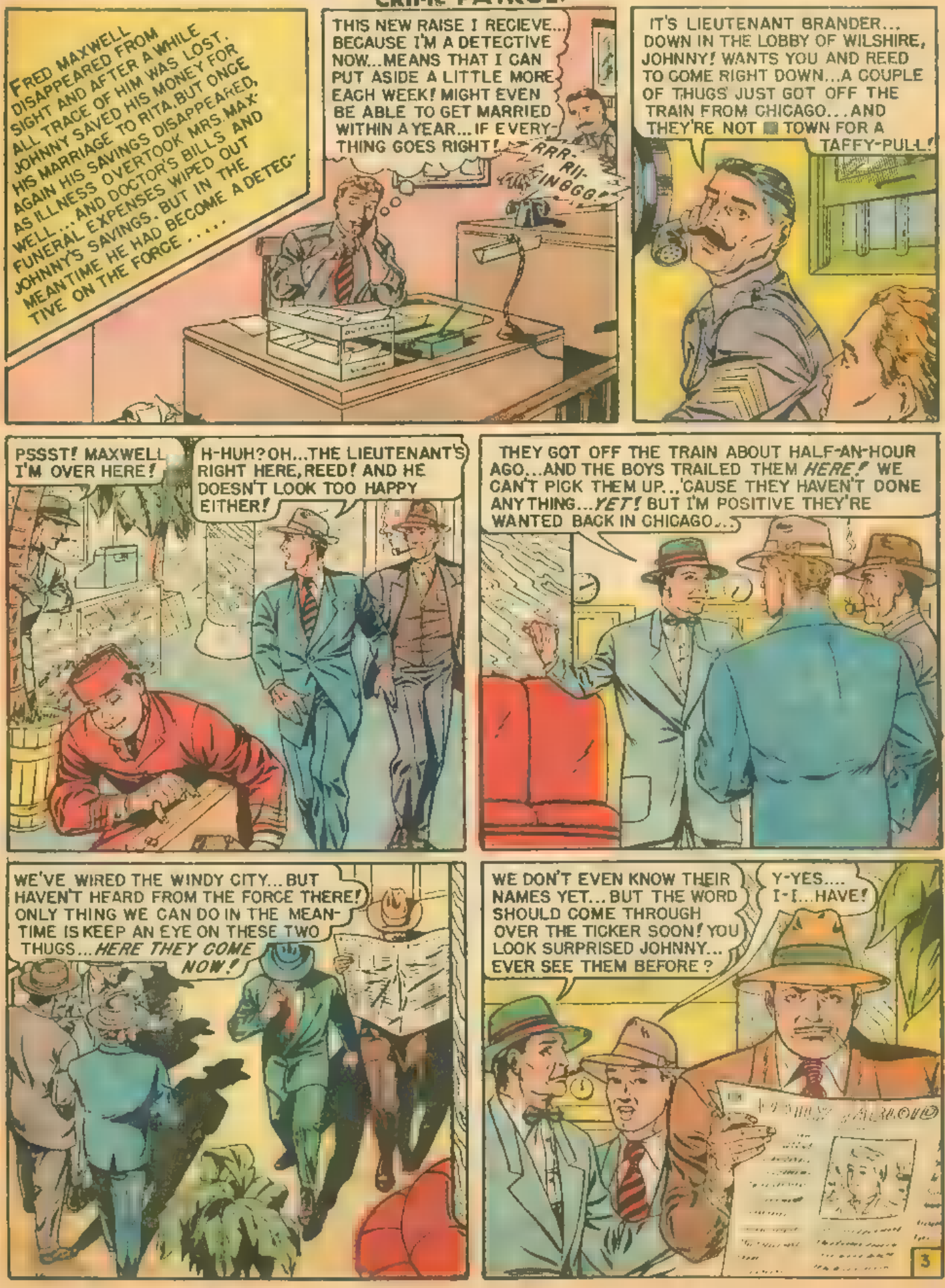
THOUGH THE TENSION BETWEEN THE TWO STEP-BROTHERS NEVER DISAPPEARED COMPLETELY, IT *DID* EASE UP FROM TIME TO TIME. AND ABOUT A YEAR LATER...

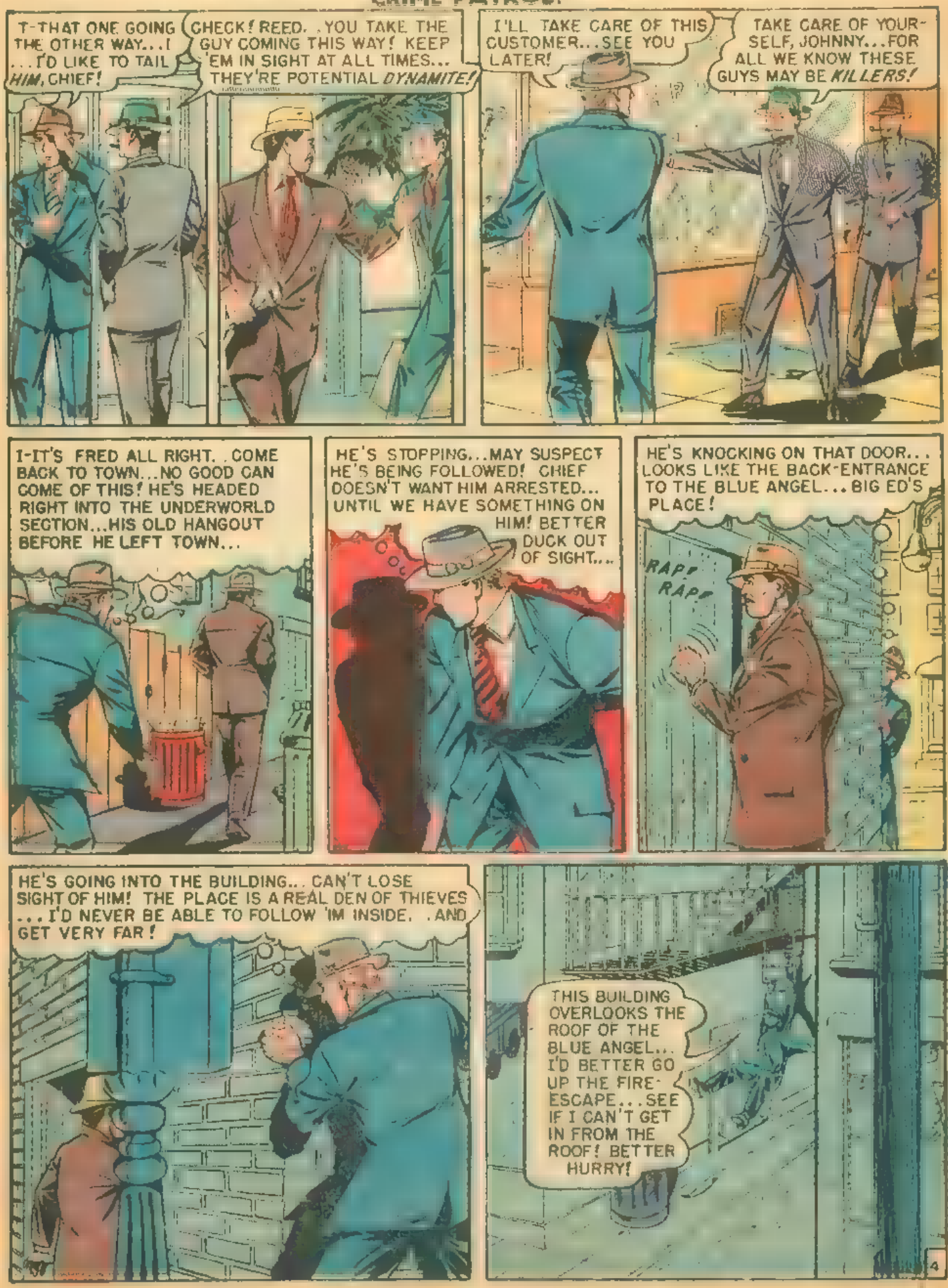


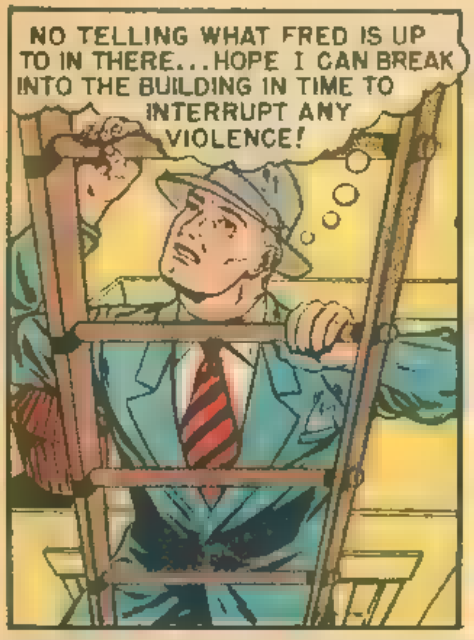


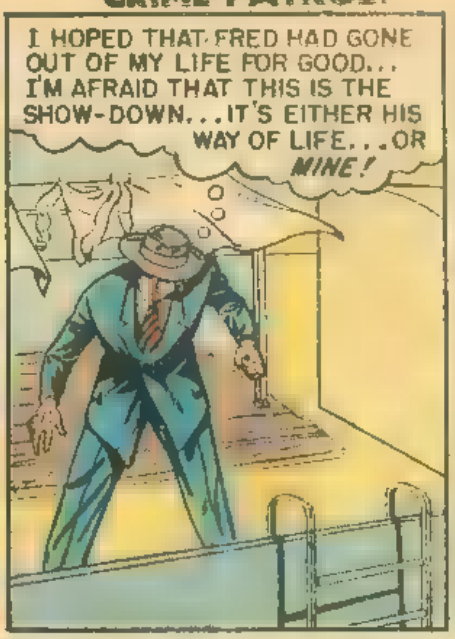


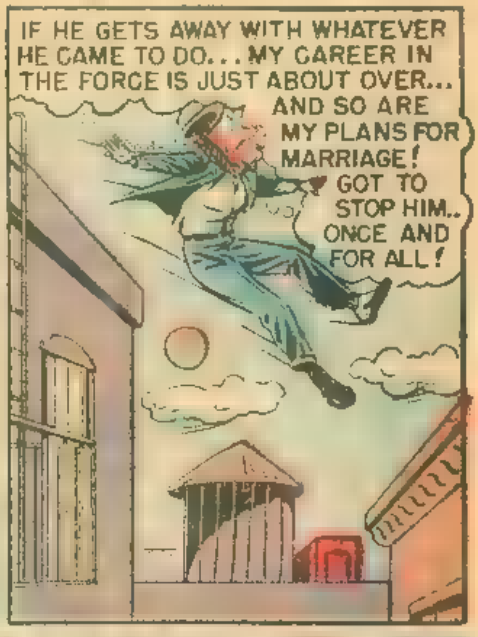


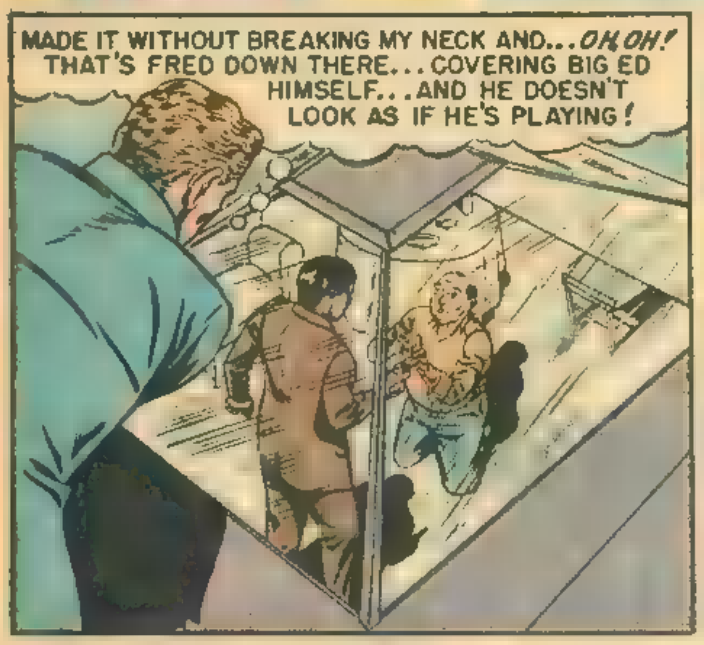

FRED MAXWELL DISAPPEARED FROM SIGHT AND AFTER A WHILE ALL TRACE OF HIM WAS LOST. JOHNNY SAVED HIS MONEY FOR HIS MARRIAGE TO RITA, BUT ONCE AGAIN HIS SAVINGS DISAPPEARED, AS ILLNESS OVERTOOK MRS. MAXWELL... AND DOCTOR'S BILLS AND FUNERAL EXPENSES WIPED OUT JOHNNY'S SAVINGS. BUT IN THE MEANTIME HE HAD BECOME A DETECTIVE ON THE FORCE.....
THIS NEW RAISE I RECIEVE... BECAUSE I'M A DETECTIVE NOW...MEANS THAT I CAN PUT ASIDE A LITTLE MORE EACH WEEK! MIGHT EVEN BE ABLE TO GET MARRIED WITHIN A YEAR...IF EVERYTHING GOES RIGHT!
RRR-RII-INBGG!
IT'S LIEUTENANT BRANDER... DOWN IN THE LOBBY OF WILSHIRE, JOHNNY! WANTS YOU AND REED TO COME RIGHT DOWN...A COUPLE OF THUGS JUST GOT OFF THE TRAIN FROM CHICAGO...AND THEY'RE NOT TOWN FOR A TAFFY-PULL!
PSSST! MAXWELL I'M OVER HERE!
H-HUH? OH...THE LIEUTENANT'S RIGHT HERE, REED! AND HE DOESN'T LOOK TOO HAPPY EITHER!
THEY GOT OFF THE TRAIN ABOUT HALF-AN-HOUR AGO...AND THE BOYS TRAILED THEM HERE! WE CAN'T PICK THEM UP...'CAUSE THEY HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING...YET! BUT I'M POSITIVE THEY'RE WANTED BACK IN CHICAGO...
WE'VE WIRED THE WINDY CITY...BUT HAVEN'T HEARD FROM THE FORCE THERE! ONLY THING WE CAN DO IN THE MEANTIME IS KEEP AN EYE ON THESE TWO THUGS...HERE THEY COME NOW!
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW THEIR NAMES YET...BUT THE WORD SHOULD COME THROUGH OVER THE TICKER SOON! YOU LOOK SURPRISED JOHNNY... EVER SEE THEM BEFORE?
Y-YES.... I-I...HAVE!

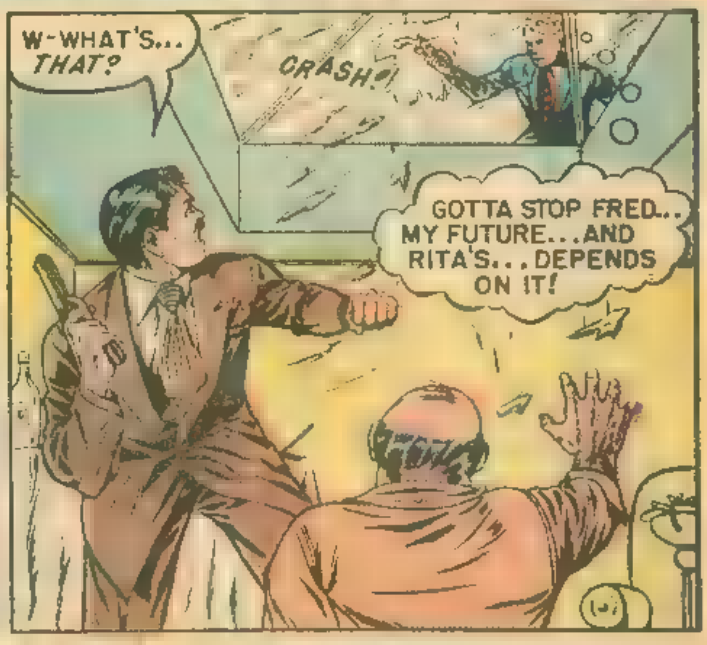

T-THAT ONE GOING THE OTHER WAY...I ...I'D LIKE TO TAIL HIM, CHIEF!
CHECK! REED. .YOU TAKE THE GUY COMING THIS WAY! KEEP 'EM IN SIGHT AT ALL TIMES... THEY'RE POTENTIAL DYNAMITE!
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS CUSTOMER...SEE YOU LATER!
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, JOHNNY...FOR ALL WE KNOW THESE GUYS MAY BE KILLERS!
I-IT'S FRED ALL RIGHT. .COME BACK TO TOWN...NO GOOD CAN COME OF THIS! HE'S HEADED RIGHT INTO THE UNDERWORLD SECTION...HIS OLD HANGOUT BEFORE HE LEFT TOWN...
HE'S STOPPING...MAY SUSPECT HE'S BEING FOLLOWED! CHIEF DOESN'T WANT HIM ARRESTED... UNTIL WE HAVE SOMETHING ON HIM! BETTER DUCK OUT OF SIGHT...
HE'S KNOCKING ON THAT DOOR... LOOKS LIKE THE BACK-ENTRANCE TO THE BLUE ANGEL...BIG ED'S PLACE!
RAP! RAP!
HE'S GOING INTO THE BUILDING... CAN'T LOSE SIGHT OF HIM! THE PLACE IS A REAL DEN OF THIEVES ...I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO FOLLOW 'IM INSIDE. .AND GET VERY FAR!
THIS BUILDING OVERLOOKS THE ROOF OF THE BLUE ANGEL... I'D BETTER GO UP THE FIRE-ESCAPE...SEE IF I CAN'T GET IN FROM THE ROOF! BETTER HURRY!

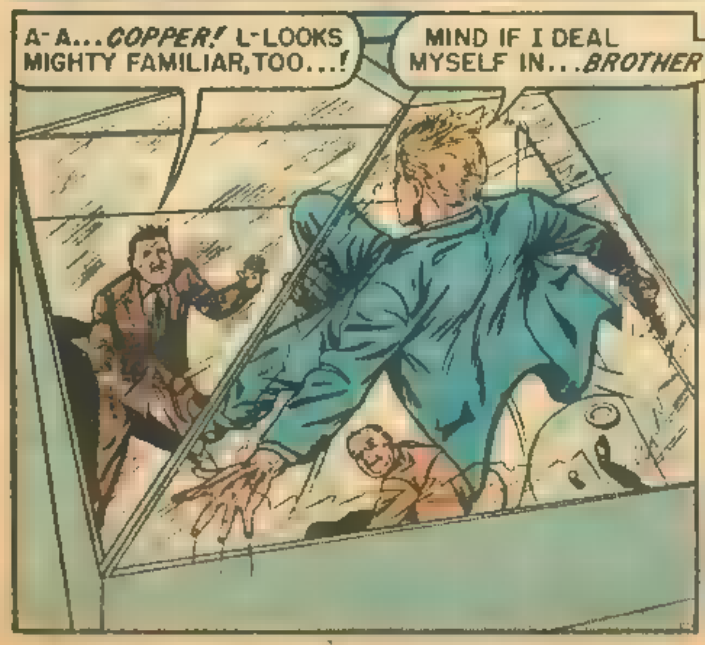

NO TELLING WHAT FRED IS UP TO IN THERE...HOPE I CAN BREAK INTO THE BUILDING IN TIME TO INTERRUPT ANY VIOLENCE!

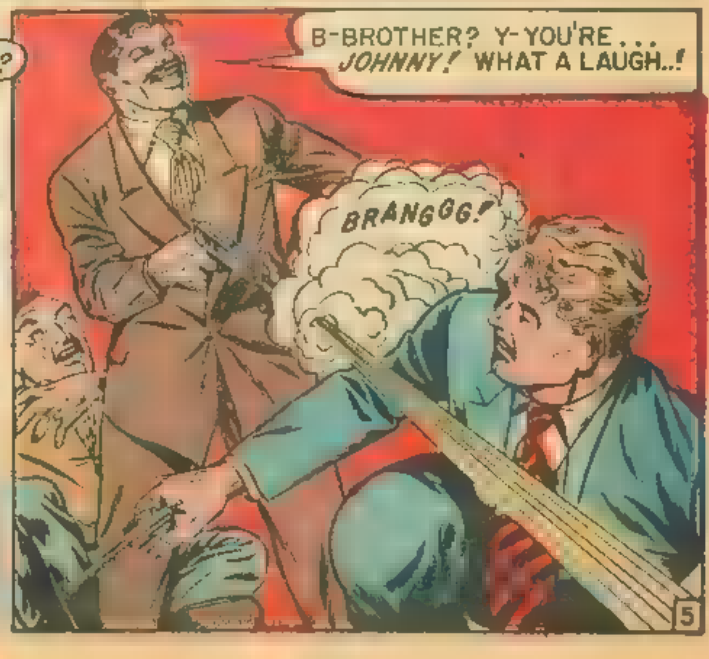

I HOPED THAT FRED HAD GONE OUT OF MY LIFE FOR GOOD... I'M AFRAID THAT THIS IS THE SHOW-DOWN...IT'S EITHER HIS WAY OF LIFE...OR *MINE!*

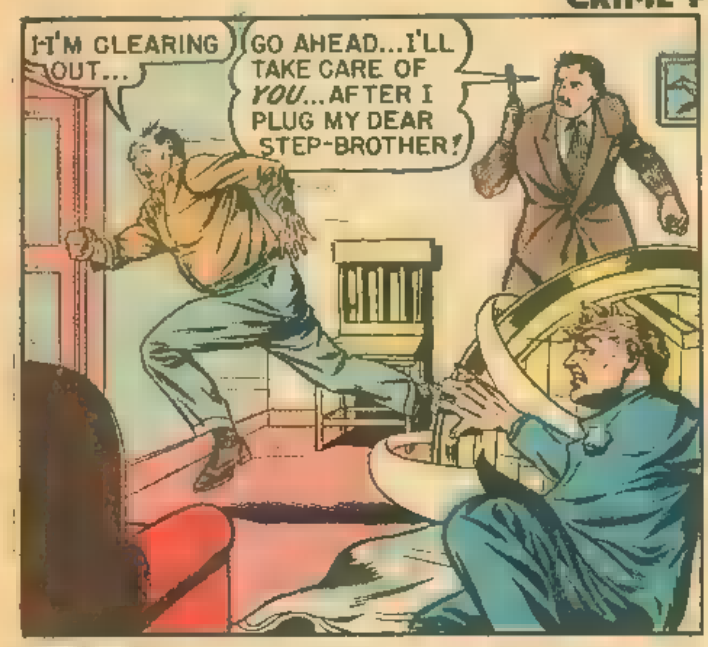

IF HE GETS AWAY WITH WHATEVER HE CAME TO DO...MY CAREER IN THE FORCE IS JUST ABOUT OVER... AND SO ARE MY PLANS FOR MARRIAGE! GOT TO STOP HIM.. ONCE AND FOR ALL!

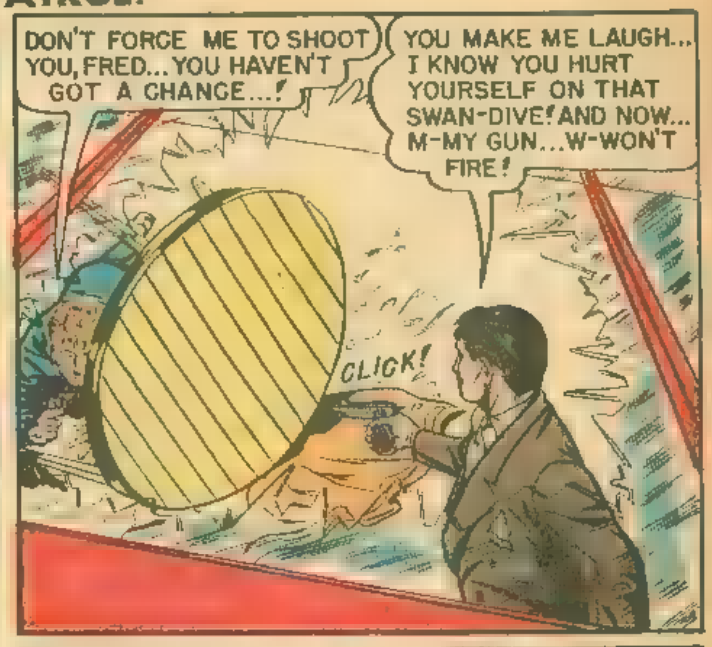

MADE IT WITHOUT BREAKING MY NECK AND...*OH, OH!* THAT'S FRED DOWN THERE...COVERING BIG ED HIMSELF...AND HE DOESN'T LOOK AS IF HE'S PLAYING!


W-WHAT'S... *THAT?*
CRASH!
GOTTA STOP FRED... MY FUTURE...AND RITA'S...DEPENDS ON IT!


A-A...*COPPER!* L-LOOKS MIGHTY FAMILIAR, TOO...!
MIND IF I DEAL MYSELF IN...*BROTHER?*

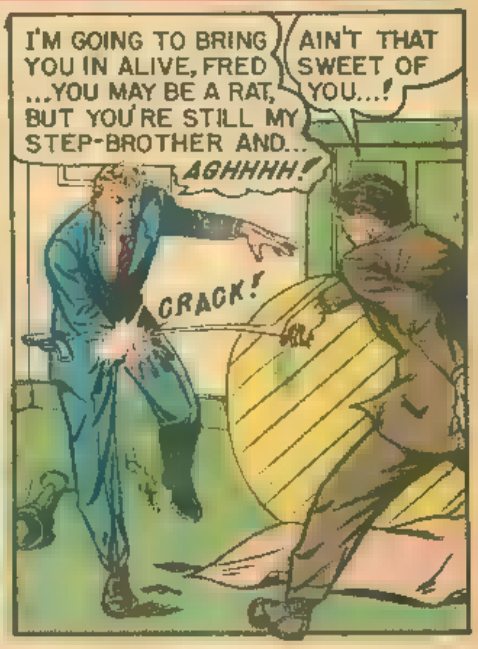

B-BROTHER? Y-YOU'RE... *JOHNNY!* WHAT A LAUGH..!
BRANGGG!


I-I'M CLEARING OUT...
GO AHEAD...I'LL TAKE CARE OF *YOU*...AFTER I PLUG MY DEAR STEP-BROTHER!

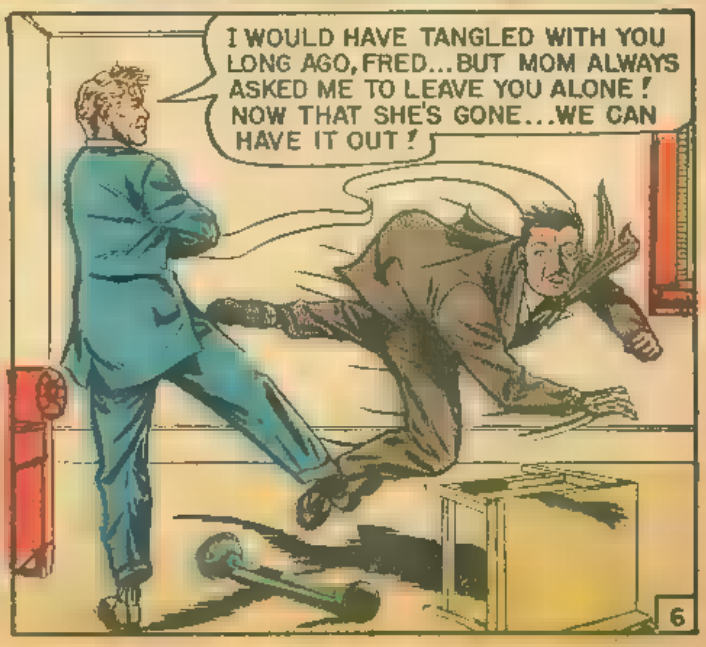

DON'T FORCE ME TO SHOOT YOU, FRED...YOU HAVEN'T GOT A CHANCE...!
YOU MAKE ME LAUGH... I KNOW YOU HURT YOURSELF ON THAT SWAN-DIVE! AND NOW... M-MY GUN...W-WON'T FIRE!
CLICK!

YOUR NUMBER'S UP, FRED.... THROW THAT GUN DOWN AND PUT YOUR HANDS UP! THE CHIEF *THOUGHT* YOU WERE HERE TO PULL SOME MONKEY-BUSINESS.
THINK YOU'VE CORNERED ME, EH...?

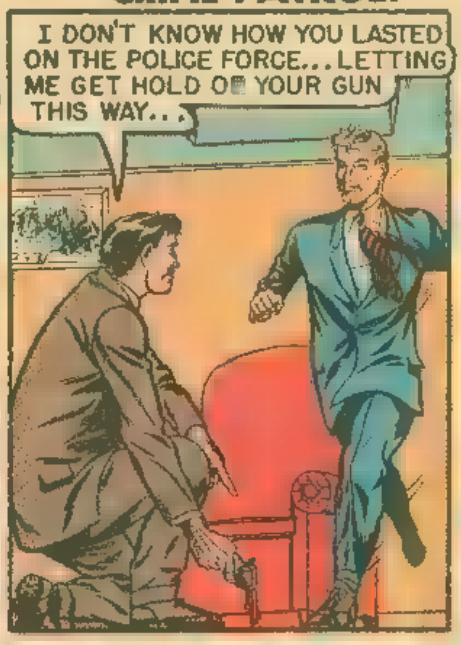
I'LL PUT MY GUN JOHNNY... RIGHT DOWN YOUR THROAT!
DON'T MAKE ME PLUG YOU, FRED....


I'M GOING TO BRING YOU IN ALIVE, FRED ...YOU MAY BE A RAT, BUT YOU'RE STILL MY STEP-BROTHER AND...
AIN'T THAT SWEET OF YOU...!
AGHHHH!
CRACK!

I ALWAYS COULD TAKE YOU APART AS A KID...AND I CAN *STILL* DO IT! MOM *ALWAYS* PAMPERED YOU... JUST 'CAUSE YOU WERE AN ORPHAN BEFORE SHE ADOPTED YOU!

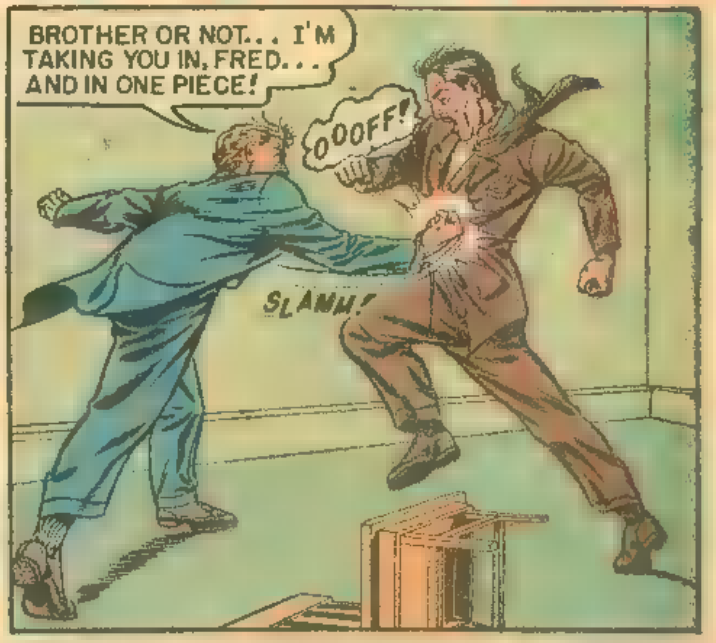

I WOULD HAVE TANGLED WITH YOU LONG AGO, FRED...BUT MOM ALWAYS ASKED ME TO LEAVE YOU ALONE! NOW THAT SHE'S GONE...WE CAN HAVE IT OUT!

YOU ALWAYS WERE A LUNK-HEAD, JOHNNY....OOOOF!
I HOPED YOU WOULDN'T COME BACK AGAIN... BUT NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE....

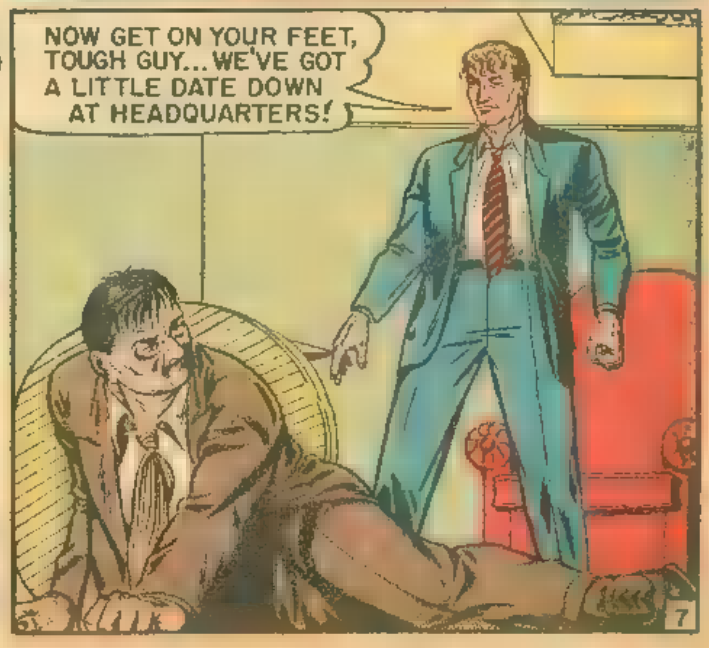

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU LASTED ON THE POLICE FORCE... LETTING ME GET HOLD OF YOUR GUN THIS WAY...

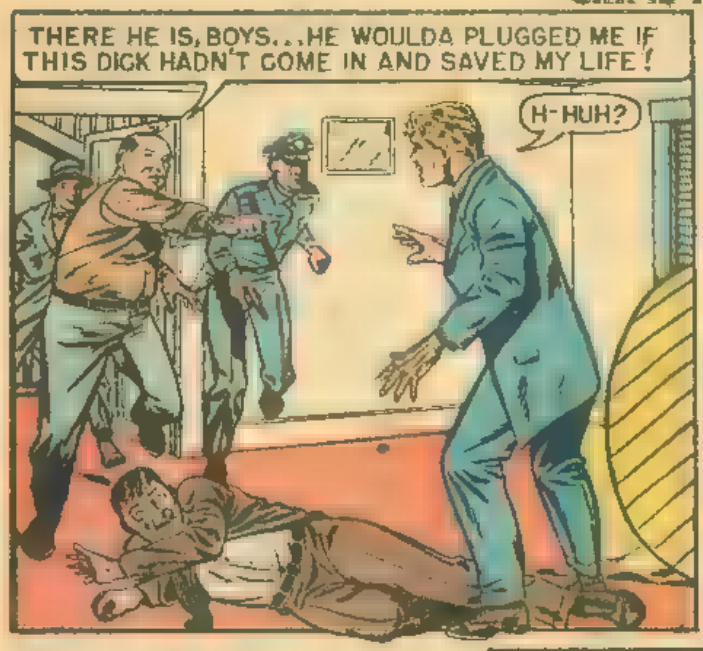
IT'S NOT GOING TO HELP YOU...WE'RE FIGHTING THIS OUT WITH OUR FISTS... AND FEET!
GET READY TO.... Y!!!!!!!
CLUNK!

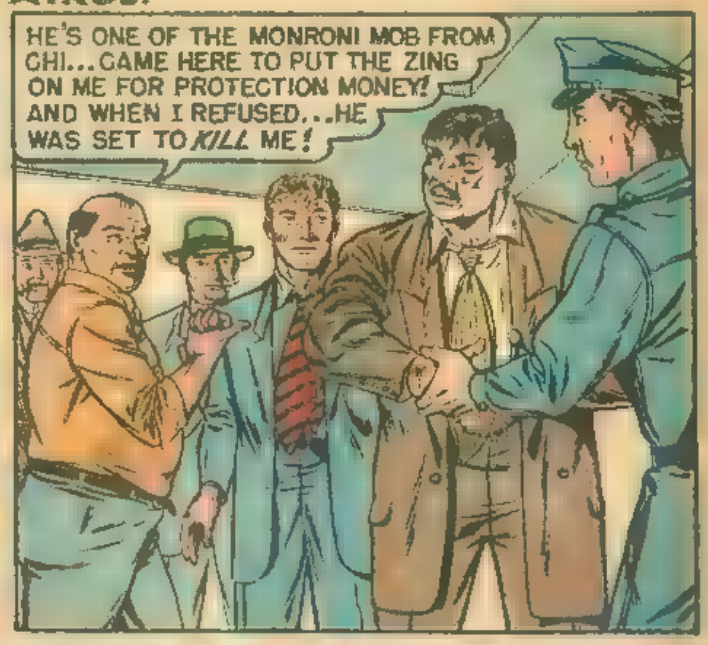
YOU'VE LIVED LONG ENOUGH PUNK... I'M GONNA MEASURE YOU FOR A COFFIN RIGHT NOW!
SWI-I-I-ISH


BROTHER OR NOT... I'M TAKING YOU IN, FRED... AND IN ONE PIECE!
OOOFF!
SLAMM!

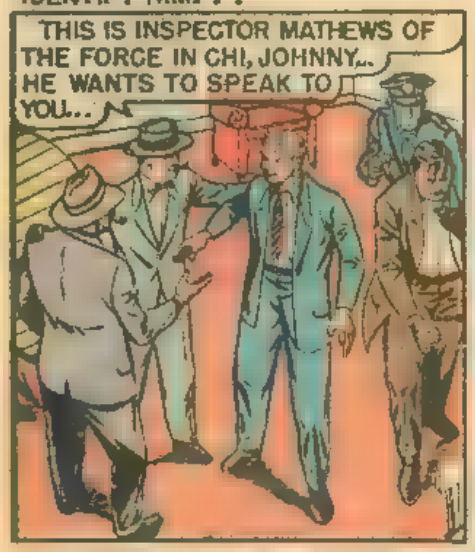
I'VE WHIPPED BETTER MEN THAN YOU WITH ONE HAND BEHIND MY... AGHHH!
YOUR LITTLE SPEECH IS JUST ABOUT OVER!
CRUNCH!

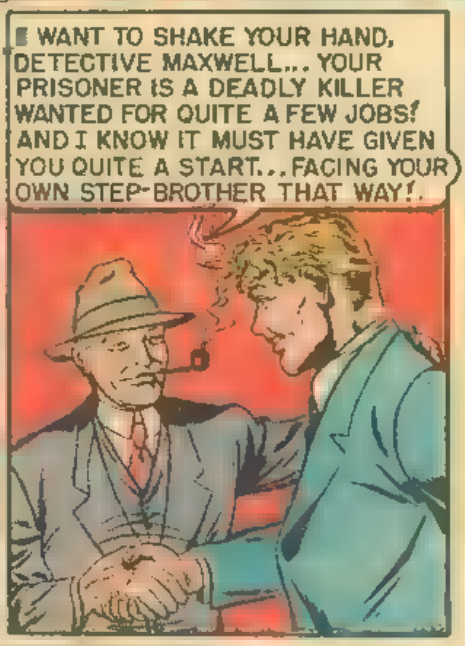

NOW GET ON YOUR FEET, TOUGH GUY... WE'VE GOT A LITTLE DATE DOWN AT HEADQUARTERS!

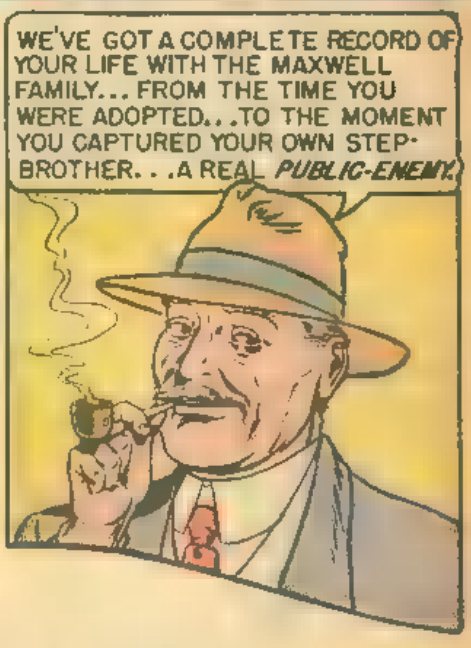


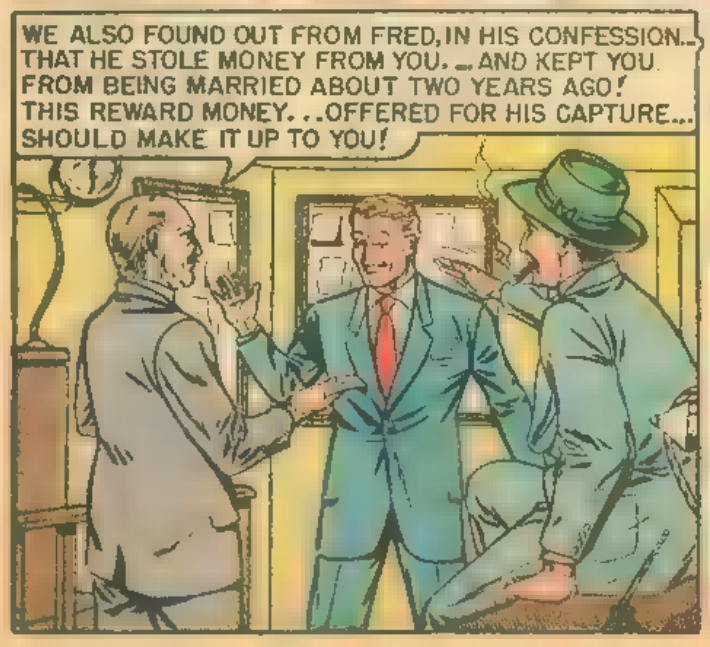


FRED MAXWELL WAS HELD UNTIL CHICAGO POLICE ARRIVED TO IDENTIFY HIM. . .

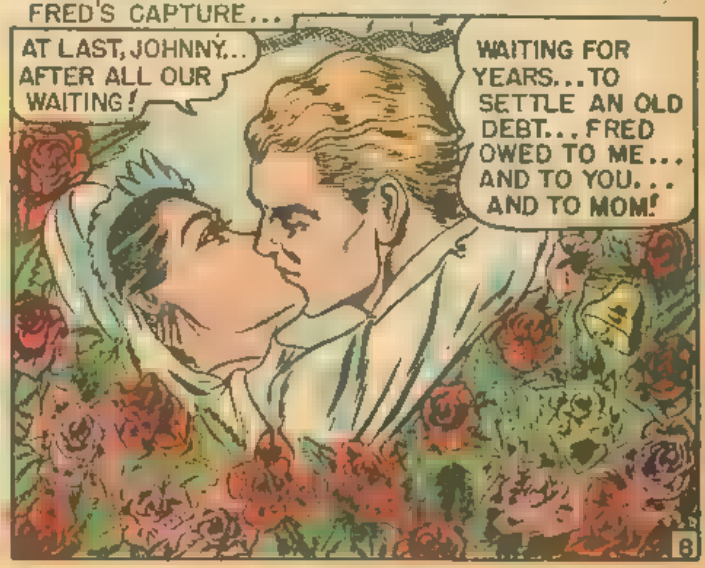








JUST A WEEK LATER, RITA AND JOHNNY MAXWELL WERE MARRIED...WITH THE MONEY HE RECEIVED FOR FRED'S CAPTURE...



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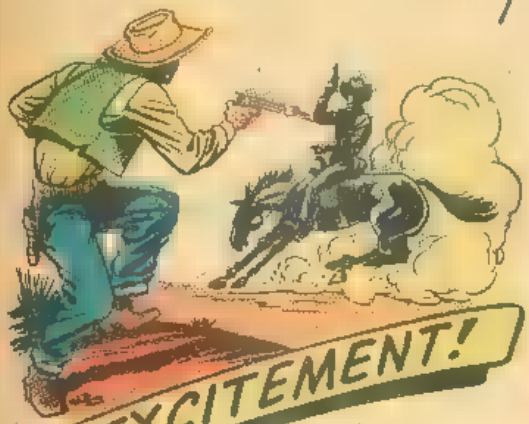

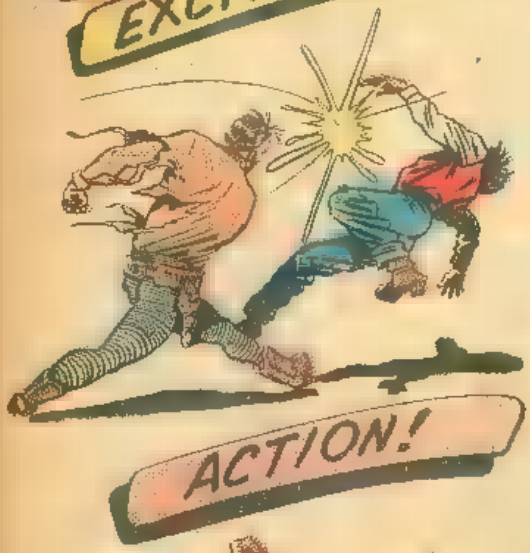

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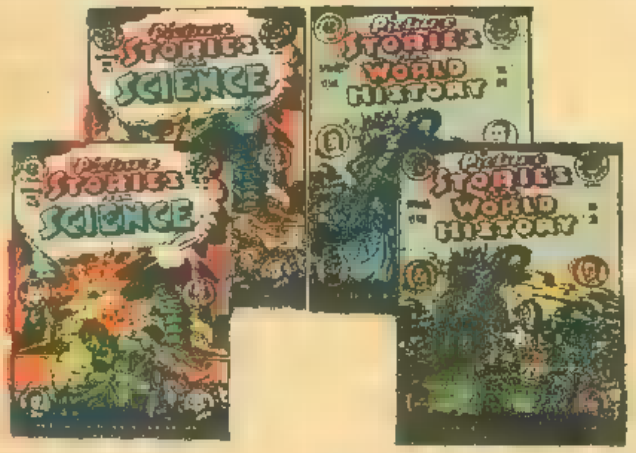

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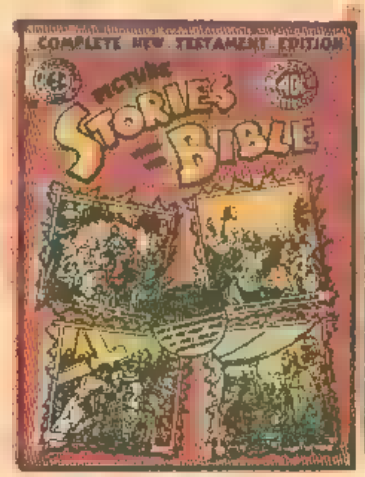

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OUT OF THE FRYING PAN

It was nigh onto sunset when the car pulled up in front of the log cabin where I live alone and like it plenty. I'm an old hermit spending the last few years of my life in the hills where I settled down after forty years in the navy. I didn't relish having my evening meal spoiled by sightseers, especially since I had a new skillet to break in.

The four men who got out of the car and came into my cabin were mean and stubble-bearded. Their beady, little eyes were red from lack of sleep. One of the forest rangers stops by with a newspaper once in a while, so I recognized them as the "Fry" Bradley gang, wanted for murder and robbery in a dozen states.

Even if I hadn't known them, "Fry" himself would have tipped me off, the way he stood by my coal stove and sniffed at the food I was preparing. He said, "Make yourself a twenty dollar bill, old timer. Toss in enough pork and beans to feed me and the boys!"

Since I'm never rude to killers, I agreed. I polished that skillet until it shone, standing near the window where the sun was coming in red and bright. I told "Fry" and his boys they never tasted French fries and beans with homemade catsup, and before I knowed it, their mouths was watering so much they couldn't hardly talk.

Well, sir, I set my pine table with an oilcloth and laid out four plates and cups and saucers. With pork and beans, hot muffins and melty butter, with coffee bubbling nice and hot and fragrant, them killers dove into that meal like it was going to be their last one! All the time they was eating, I was washing and polishing my brand new skillet until it was brighter than a baby's smile, right near the window so I could look out and see the sunset.

"Fry" give me forty dollars when he got ready to go. He laughed and said, "You cook too good to shoot, old timer. Besides, we'll be over the state line in an hour. It's only thirty miles from here."

Next day, my friend the forest ranger dropped in with a week's supply of papers. He told me how the police had established a road block and caught "Fry" and his killers after a gun battle.

"Lucky thing you've been in the habit of signalling your daughter and grandson in Morse Code, old timer! They got your message and scooted over to the police station. Funny, though, that 'Fry' would let you get away with that right in front of him!"

"He didn't know I was signalling," I told him. "I used my brand new skillet. After forty years in the navy operating a heliograph, it was a cinch. I bet 'Fry' will get the stomach aches every time he thinks about that skillet! If it had been my old one, he'd be free as a bird right now! But the new one was so shiny it was like a mirror!"

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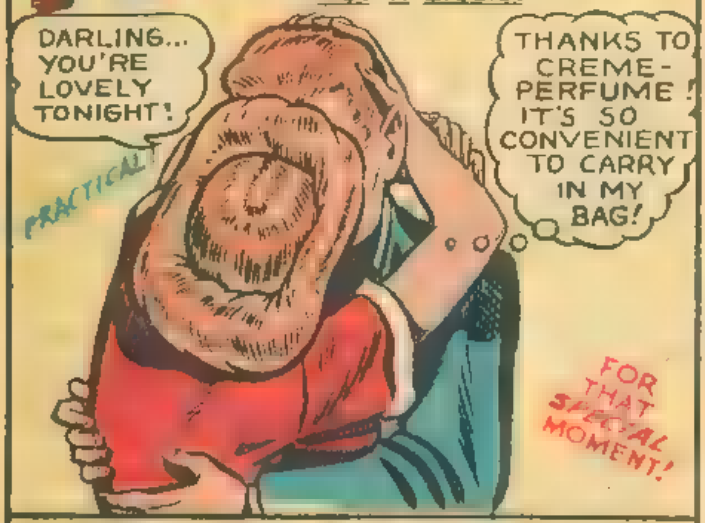

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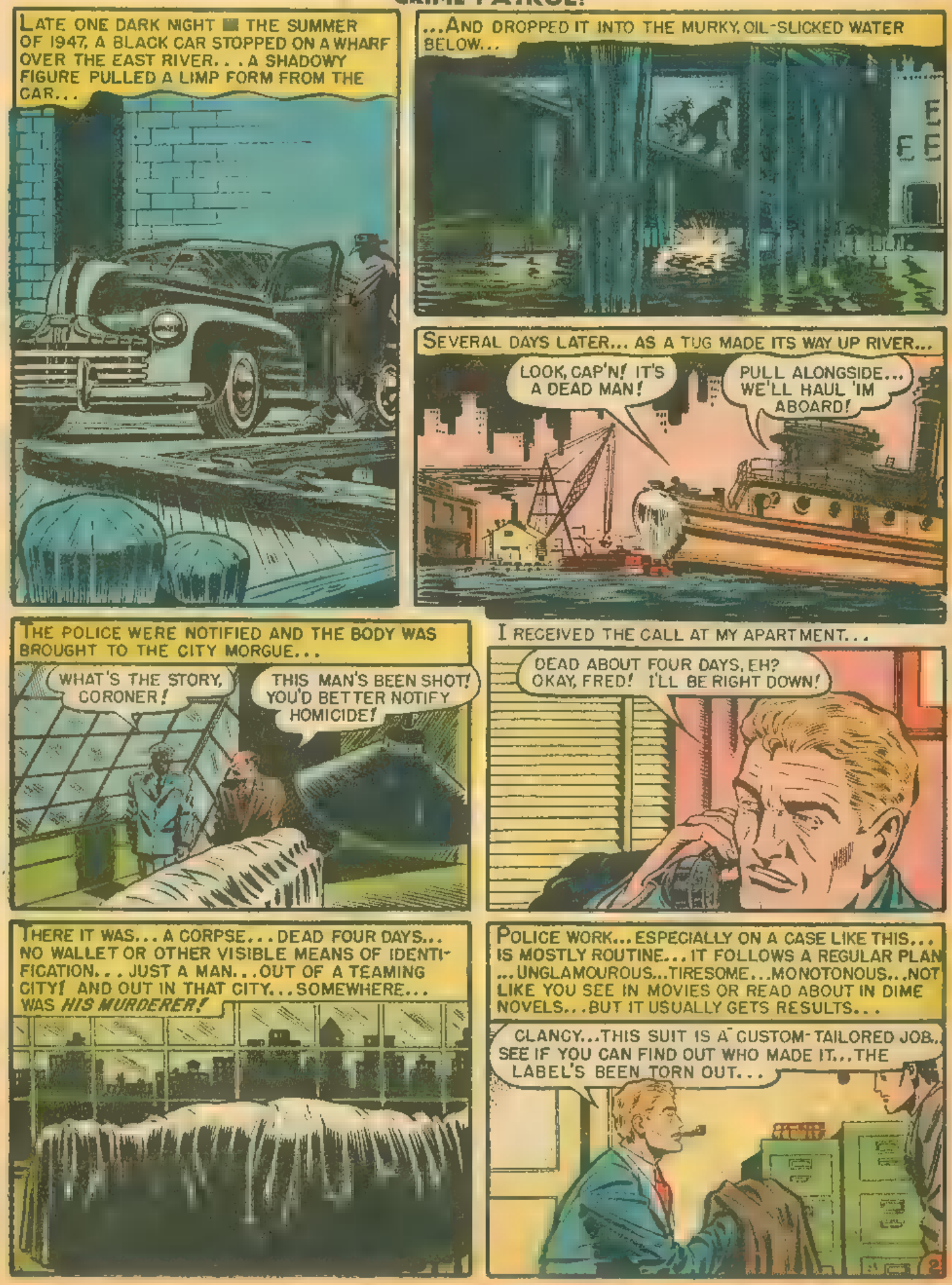
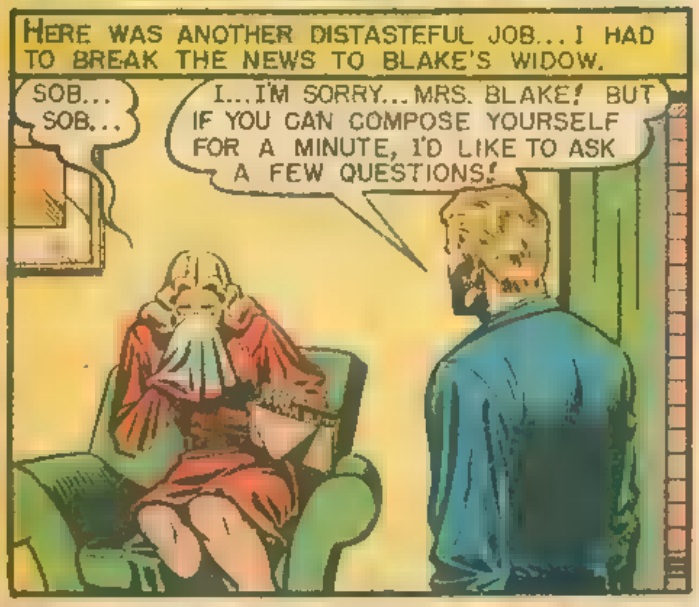
WORK WITH ME, DETECTIVE-LIEUTENANT CRAIG DIXON* OF THE NEW YORK CITY HOMICIDE SQUAD, AS I UNRAVEL THIS BAFFLING CRIME AND TRACK DOWN
"THE GUILTY!"
*ALL NAMES IN THIS TRUE POLICE DETECTION STORY HAVE BEEN FICTIONIZED TO PROTECT INNOCENT PEOPLE EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY INVOLVED.


LATE ONE DARK NIGHT IN THE SUMMER OF 1947, A BLACK CAR STOPPED ON A WHARF OVER THE EAST RIVER... A SHADOWY FIGURE PULLED A LIMP FORM FROM THE CAR...
...AND DROPPED IT INTO THE MURKY, OIL-SLICKED WATER BELOW...
SEVERAL DAYS LATER... AS A TUG MADE ITS WAY UP RIVER...
LOOK, CAP'N! IT'S A DEAD MAN!
PULL ALONGSIDE... WE'LL HAUL 'IM ABOARD!
THE POLICE WERE NOTIFIED AND THE BODY WAS BROUGHT TO THE CITY MORGUE...
WHAT'S THE STORY, CORONER!
THIS MAN'S BEEN SHOT! YOU'D BETTER NOTIFY HOMICIDE!
I RECEIVED THE CALL AT MY APARTMENT...
DEAD ABOUT FOUR DAYS, EH? OKAY, FRED! I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN!
THERE IT WAS... A CORPSE... DEAD FOUR DAYS... NO WALLET OR OTHER VISIBLE MEANS OF IDENTIFICATION... JUST A MAN... OUT OF A TEAMING CITY! AND OUT IN THAT CITY... SOMEWHERE... WAS HIS MURDERER!
POLICE WORK... ESPECIALLY ON A CASE LIKE THIS... IS MOSTLY ROUTINE... IT FOLLOWS A REGULAR PLAN ...UNGLAMOUROUS...TIRESOME...MONOTONOUS...NOT LIKE YOU SEE IN MOVIES OR READ ABOUT IN DIME NOVELS...BUT IT USUALLY GETS RESULTS...
CLANCY...THIS SUIT IS A CUSTOM-TAILORED JOB.. SEE IF YOU CAN FIND OUT WHO MADE IT...THE LABEL'S BEEN TORN OUT...
2

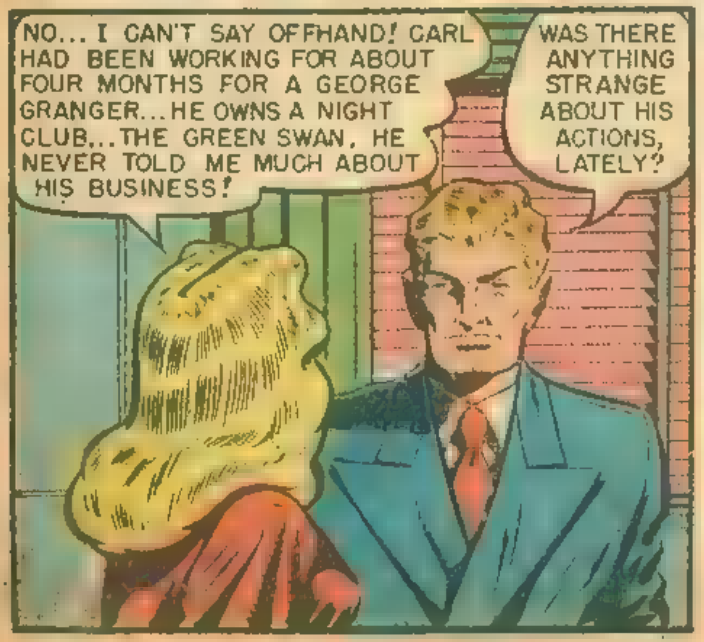
YES... MONOTOUS ROUTINE... ENDLESS QUESTIONS... AND THEN ...A BREAK...
YES... THAT'S MY WORK... I CAN TELL! I'LL LOOK UP MY RECORDS AND TELL YOU WHO I MADE IT FOR!

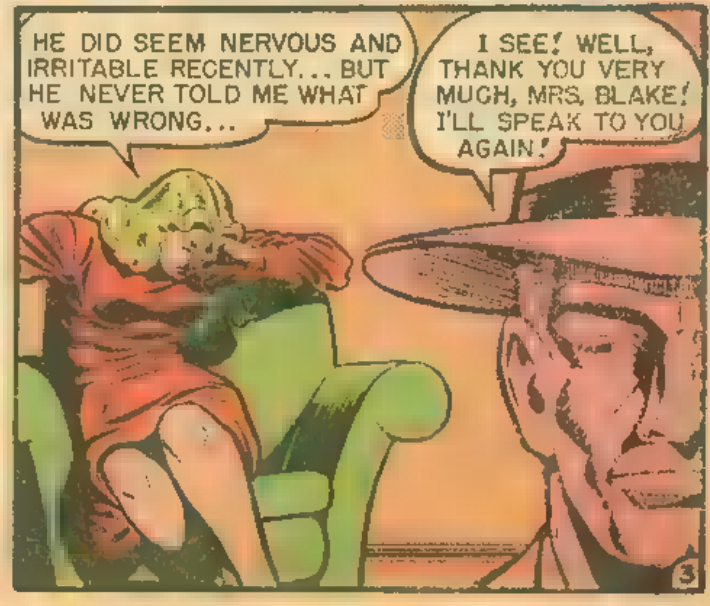
HELLO, CHIEF! CLANCY! I GOT THE INFORMATION! THE SUIT WAS MADE FOR CARL BLAKE, 1701 EAST 92ND STREET...

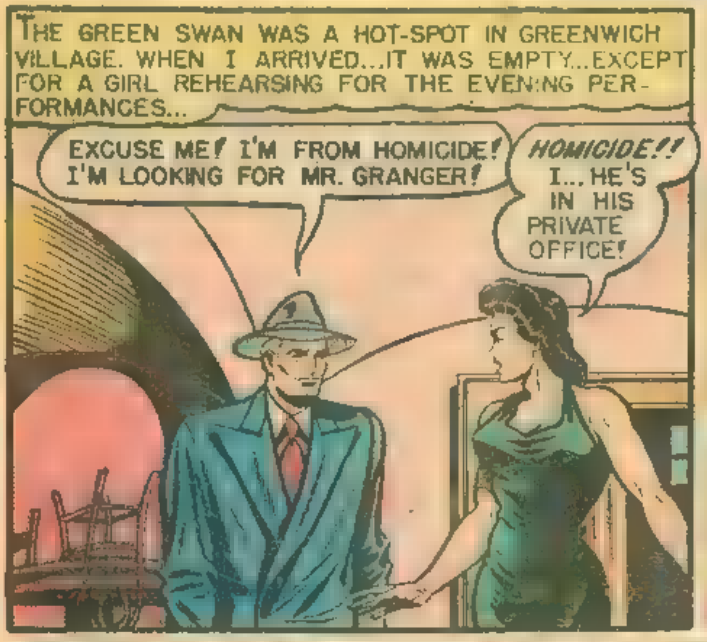
GOOD WORK, CLANCY! I'LL GET RIGHT OVER THERE...

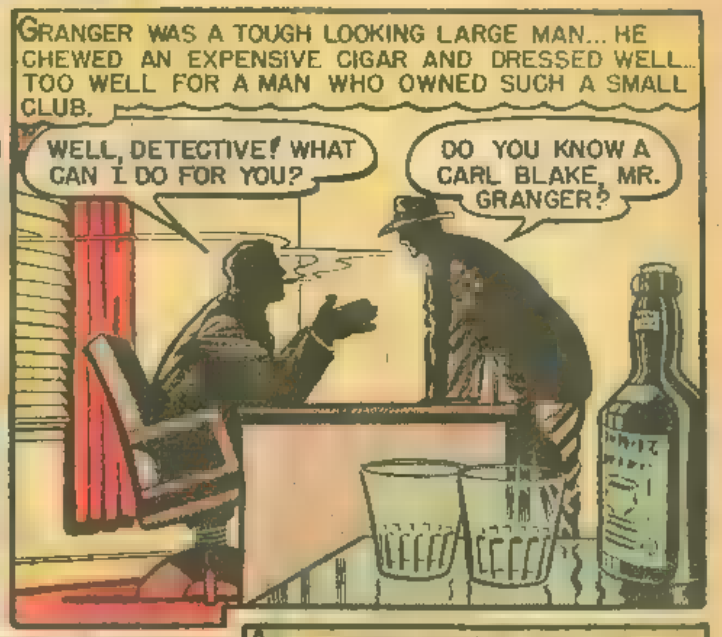

HERE WAS ANOTHER DISTASTEFUL JOB... I HAD TO BREAK THE NEWS TO BLAKE'S WIDOW.
SOB... SOB...
I... I'M SORRY... MRS. BLAKE! BUT IF YOU CAN COMPOSE YOURSELF FOR A MINUTE, I'D LIKE TO ASK A FEW QUESTIONS!

...GO AHEAD... I'D... LIKE TO HELP YOU... IF I CAN!
DO YOU KNOW WHO MIGHT HAVE DONE THIS, MRS. BLAKE?


NO... I CAN'T SAY OFFHAND! CARL HAD BEEN WORKING FOR ABOUT FOUR MONTHS FOR A GEORGE GRANGER... HE OWNS A NIGHT CLUB... THE GREEN SWAN. HE NEVER TOLD ME MUCH ABOUT HIS BUSINESS!
WAS THERE ANYTHING STRANGE ABOUT HIS ACTIONS, LATELY?


HE DID SEEM NERVOUS AND IRRITABLE RECENTLY... BUT HE NEVER TOLD ME WHAT WAS WRONG...
I SEE! WELL, THANK YOU VERY MUCH, MRS. BLAKE! I'LL SPEAK TO YOU AGAIN!

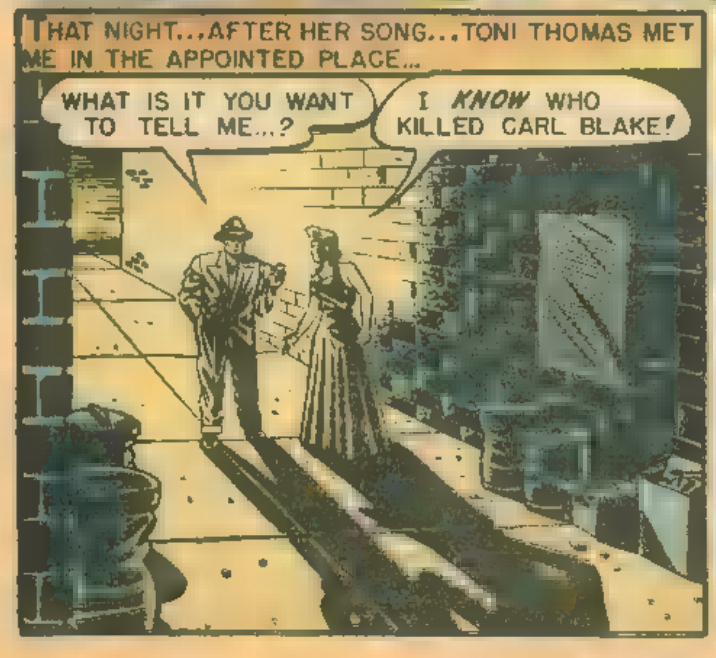

THE GREEN SWAN WAS A HOT-SPOT IN GREENWICH VILLAGE. WHEN I ARRIVED...IT WAS EMPTY...EXCEPT FOR A GIRL REHEARSING FOR THE EVENING PERFORMANCES...
EXCUSE ME! I'M FROM HOMICIDE! I'M LOOKING FOR MR. GRANGER!
HOMICIDE!! I... HE'S IN HIS PRIVATE OFFICE!

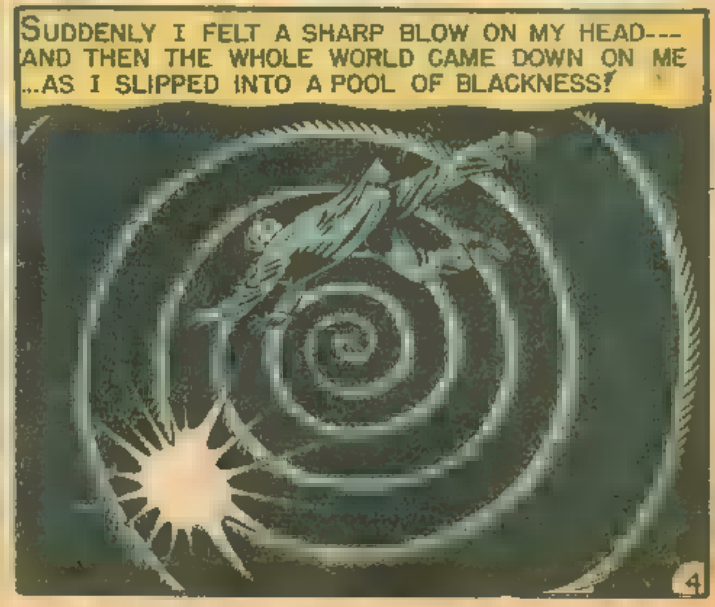

GRANGER WAS A TOUGH LOOKING LARGE MAN... HE CHEWED AN EXPENSIVE CIGAR AND DRESSED WELL... TOO WELL FOR A MAN WHO OWNED SUCH A SMALL CLUB.
WELL, DETECTIVE! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
DO YOU KNOW A CARL BLAKE, MR. GRANGER?

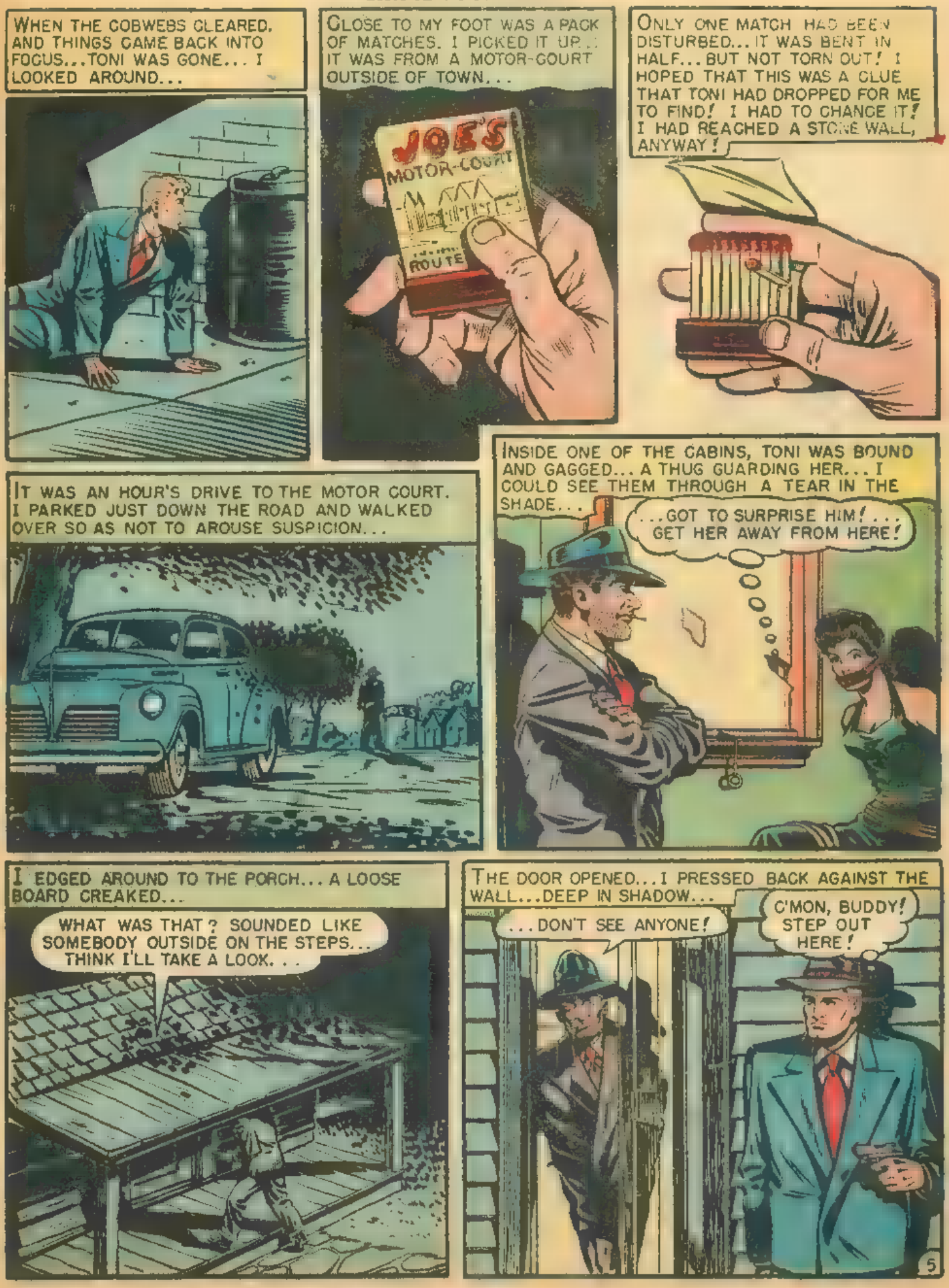
SURE...HE WORKED FOR ME TILL ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO! I FIRED HIM! ANYTHING WRONG?
HE'S DEAD, GRANGER! ...BEEN SHOT!

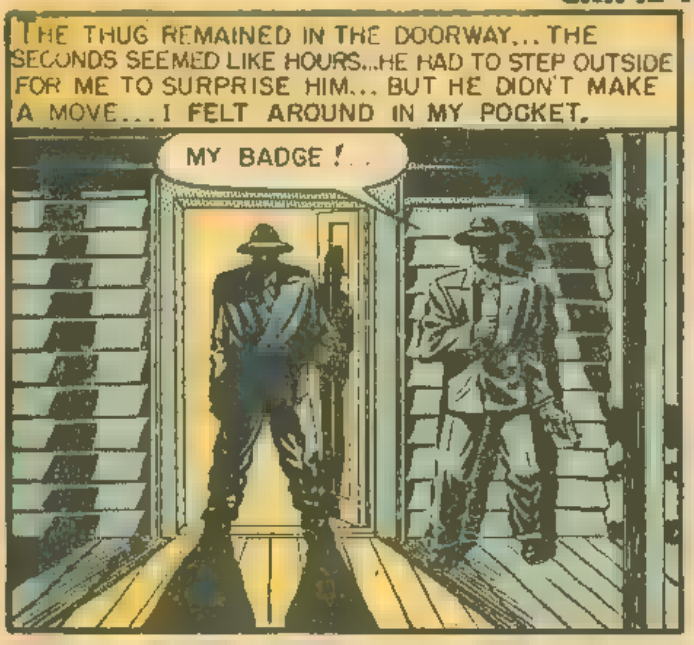
OH? THAT'S TOO BAD! I...I'M SORRY I CAN'T HELP YOU, DETECTIVE!
I AM TO... GRANGER! I'LL BE SEEING YOU AGAIN, THOUGH!

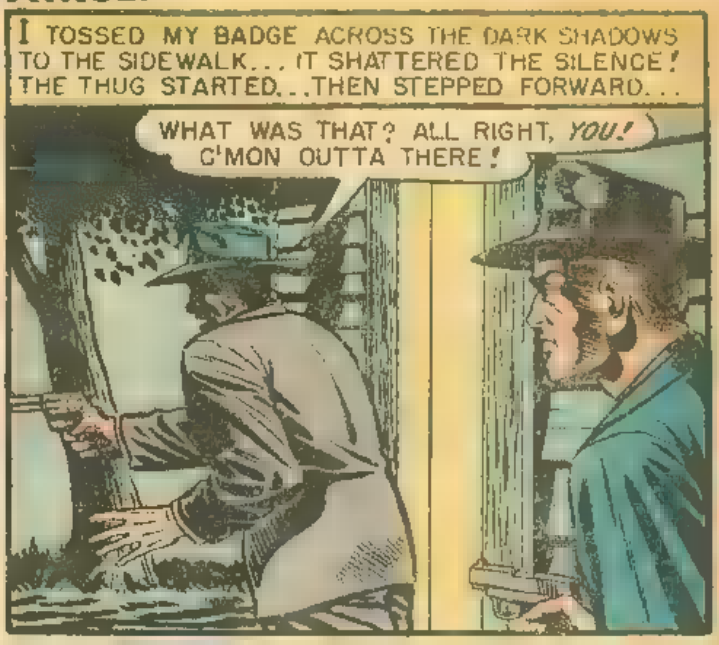
AS I MADE MY WAY TOWARDS THE EXIT...THE GIRL WHO WAS REHEARSING HER NUMBERS STOPPED ME...
I'VE GOT TO SEE YOU...I OVERHEARD ABOUT CARL...
MEET ME AFTER THE SHOW TONIGHT IN THE SIDE ALLEY!

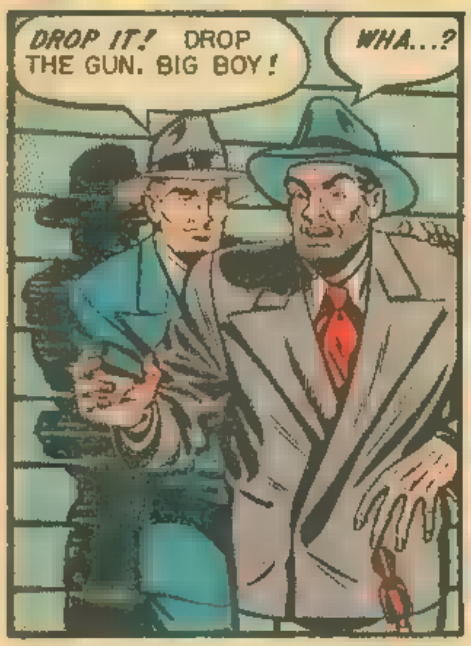

THAT NIGHT...AFTER HER SONG...TONI THOMAS MET ME IN THE APPOINTED PLACE...
WHAT IS IT YOU WANT TO TELL ME...?
I KNOW WHO KILLED CARL BLAKE!


SUDDENLY I FELT A SHARP BLOW ON MY HEAD--- AND THEN THE WHOLE WORLD CAME DOWN ON ME ...AS I SLIPPED INTO A POOL OF BLACKNESS!


WHEN THE COBWEBS CLEARED, AND THINGS CAME BACK INTO FOCUS...TONI WAS GONE... I LOOKED AROUND...
CLOSE TO MY FOOT WAS A PACK OF MATCHES. I PICKED IT UP... IT WAS FROM A MOTOR-COURT OUTSIDE OF TOWN...
JOE'S
MOTOR-COURT
ROUTE
ONLY ONE MATCH HAD BEEN DISTURBED... IT WAS BENT IN HALF... BUT NOT TORN OUT! I HOPED THAT THIS WAS A CLUE THAT TONI HAD DROPPED FOR ME TO FIND! I HAD TO CHANCE IT! I HAD REACHED A STONE WALL, ANYWAY!
IT WAS AN HOUR'S DRIVE TO THE MOTOR COURT. I PARKED JUST DOWN THE ROAD AND WALKED OVER SO AS NOT TO AROUSE SUSPICION...
INSIDE ONE OF THE CABINS, TONI WAS BOUND AND GAGGED... A THUG GUARDING HER... I COULD SEE THEM THROUGH A TEAR IN THE SHADE...
...GOT TO SURPRISE HIM! ... GET HER AWAY FROM HERE!
I EDGED AROUND TO THE PORCH... A LOOSE BOARD CREAKED...
WHAT WAS THAT? SOUNDED LIKE SOMEBODY OUTSIDE ON THE STEPS... THINK I'LL TAKE A LOOK...
THE DOOR OPENED... I PRESSED BACK AGAINST THE WALL...DEEP IN SHADOW...
...DON'T SEE ANYONE!
C'MON, BUDDY! STEP OUT HERE!


THE THUG REMAINED IN THE DOORWAY... THE SECONDS SEEMED LIKE HOURS...HE HAD TO STEP OUTSIDE FOR ME TO SURPRISE HIM... BUT HE DIDN'T MAKE A MOVE... I FELT AROUND IN MY POCKET.
MY BADGE!..

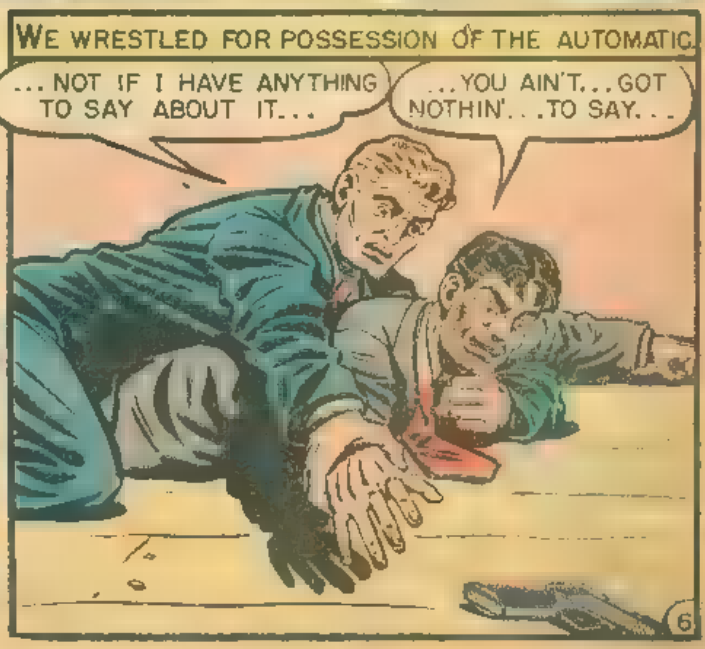

I TOSSED MY BADGE ACROSS THE DARK SHADOWS TO THE SIDEWALK... IT SHATTERED THE SILENCE! THE THUG STARTED...THEN STEPPED FORWARD...
WHAT WAS THAT? ALL RIGHT, YOU! C'MON OUTTA THERE!

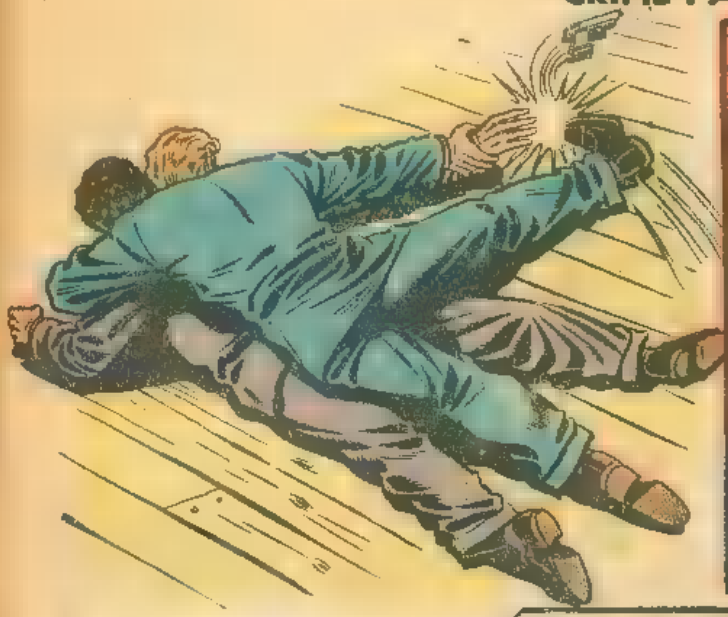

DROP IT! DROP THE GUN, BIG BOY!
WHA...?

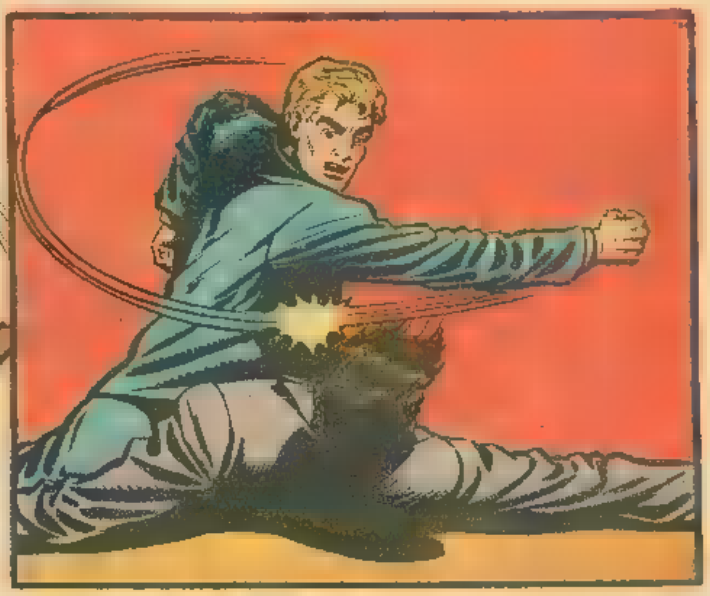
NOW GET INSIDE...

SUDDENLY THE THUG GRABBED THE DOOR... AND SWUNG IT! IT CAUGHT MY WRIST... AND THE GUN WENT CLATTERING ACROSS THE FLOOR...
OOOOF!
SURE... LEMME CLOSE THE... DOOR!

GOTTA GET THE GUN!
NO, YOU DON'T!


WE WRESTLED FOR POSSESSION OF THE AUTOMATIC.
...NOT IF I HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT IT...
...YOU AIN'T...GOT NOTHIN'...TO SAY...

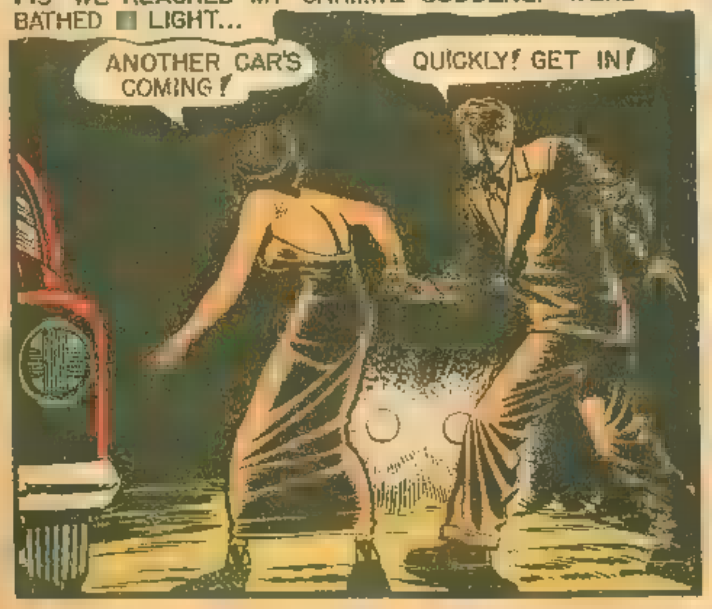




HE'S OUT COLD! NOW TO GET TONI OUT OF HERE!

THANK GOODNESS YOU'VE COME... MR. DIXON...
CRAIG TO YOU...TONI! YOU'LL BE FREE IN A MINUTE!

THE CAR'S JUST DOWN THE ROAD! C'MON!

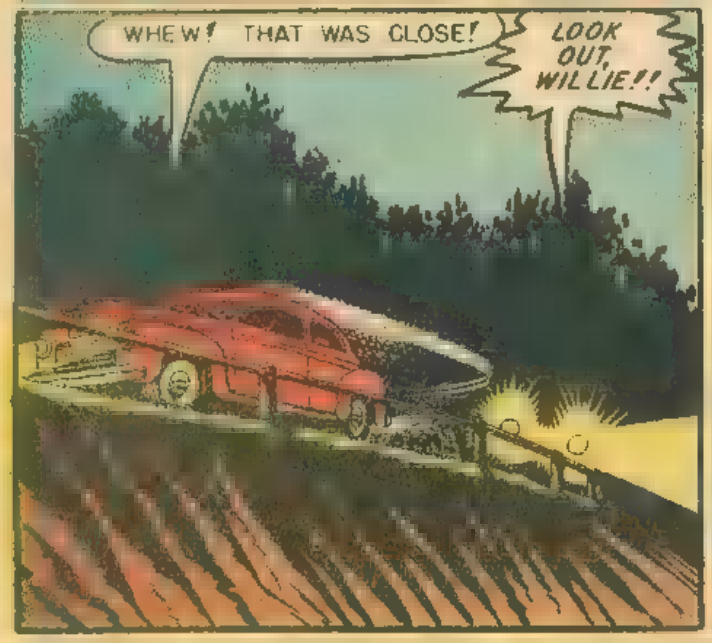

AS WE REACHED MY CAR...WE SUDDENLY WERE BATHED ■ LIGHT...
ANOTHER CAR'S COMING!
QUICKLY! GET IN!

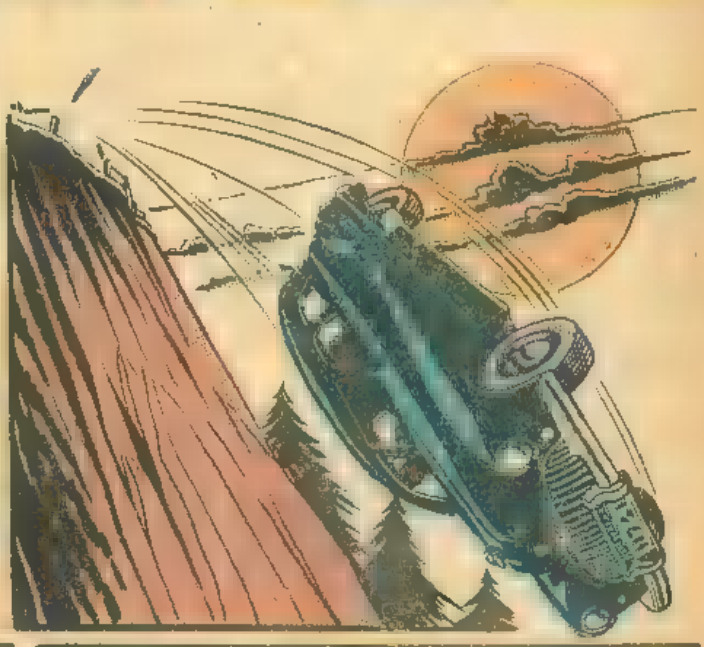
HEY, WILLIE! THAT WAS THE DAME...
TURN AROUND...THE BOSS'LL HAVE US WIPED OUT IF SHE GETS AWAY!

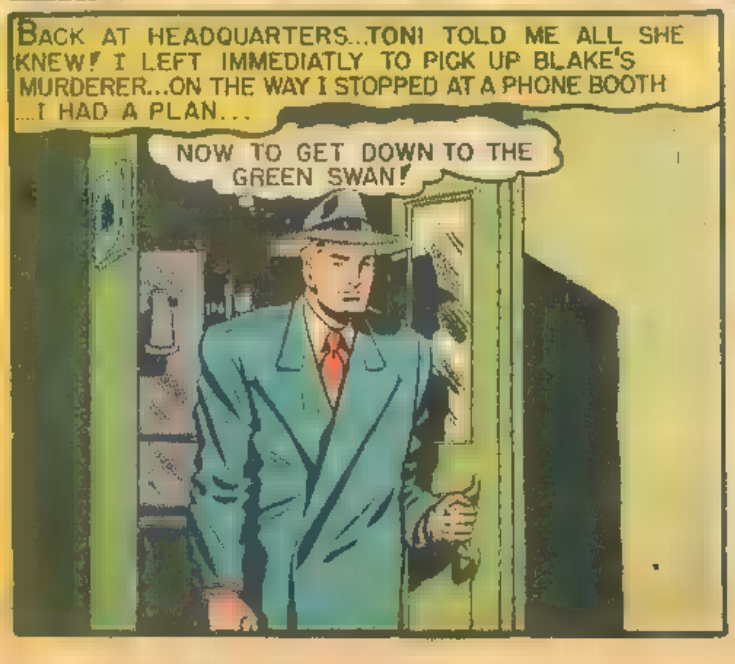
CRAIG. THEY'RE FOLLOWING US!
HOLD ON, HONEY! THIS IS GOING TO TAKE SOME FANCY DRIVING!

THEY'RE GAINING ON US CRAIG.

THERE'S A SHARP TURN UP AHEAD, TONI... IF WE CAN MAKE IT WITHOUT SLOWING DOWN WE MAY LOSE THEM!


WHEW! THAT WAS CLOSE!
LOOK OUT, WILLIE!!




BACK AT HEADQUARTERS...TONI TOLD ME ALL SHE KNEW! I LEFT IMMEDIATLY TO PICK UP BLAKE'S MURDERER...ON THE WAY I STOPPED AT A PHONE BOOTH ...I HAD A PLAN...
NOW TO GET DOWN TO THE GREEN SWAN!

DIXON...WHAT, DO YOU WANT!
I'VE GOT TONI AT HEADQUARTERS, GRANGER! I'VE COME FOR YOU!

YOU WON'T GET *ME,* DIXON... I'LL...
NO, YOU WON'T, GRANGER...

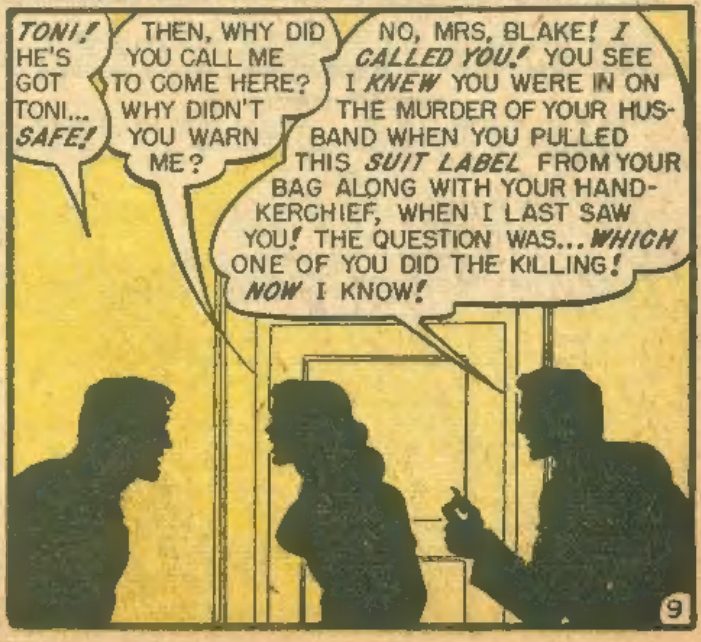
YOU'LL COME QUIETLY!
OOOF...

TONI'S TOLD ME EVERYTHING! SHE WAS LEAVING HER DRESSING ROOM WHEN SHE SAW YOU CARRY BLAKE'S BODY TO YOUR CAR...
NO! NO!

I *DUMPED* HIM... YEAH, BUT I DIDN'T *KILL* HIM ...YOU CAN'T PIN A *MURDER* ON *ME...* IT WAS...
GEORGE!

WHAT'S *HE* DOING HERE! WHAT DID YOU WANT TO SEE ME ABOUT!
SHE DID IT! *SHE* KILLED HIM!

SHE MADE ME GET RID OF THE BODY! BUT... *SHE KILLED HIM!* WE WERE IN LOVE. CARL WOULDN'T GIVE HER A DIVORCE. WE HAD A SCENE... HERE AT THE OFFICE... SHE PULLED A GUN FROM HER BAG!
YOU FOOL!! HE *TRICKED* YOU! HE COULDN'T HAVE PROVEN ANYTHING! HE DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT *ME!*


TONI! HE'S GOT TONI... *SAFE!*
THEN, WHY DID YOU CALL ME TO COME HERE? WHY DIDN'T YOU WARN ME?
NO, MRS. BLAKE! *I CALLED YOU!* YOU SEE I *KNEW* YOU WERE IN ON THE MURDER OF YOUR HUSBAND WHEN YOU PULLED THIS *SUIT LABEL* FROM YOUR BAG ALONG WITH YOUR HANDKERCHIEF, WHEN I LAST SAW YOU! THE QUESTION WAS... *WHICH* ONE OF YOU DID THE KILLING! *NOW* I KNOW!

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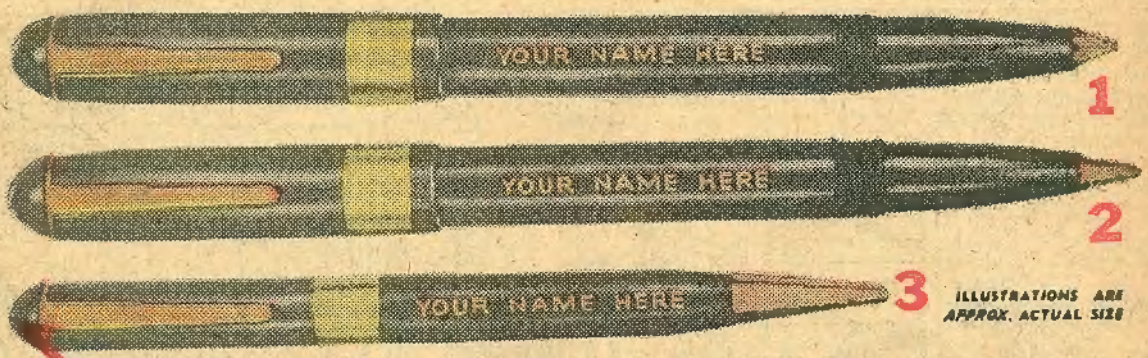

ILLUSTRATIONS ARE APPROX. ACTUAL SIZE

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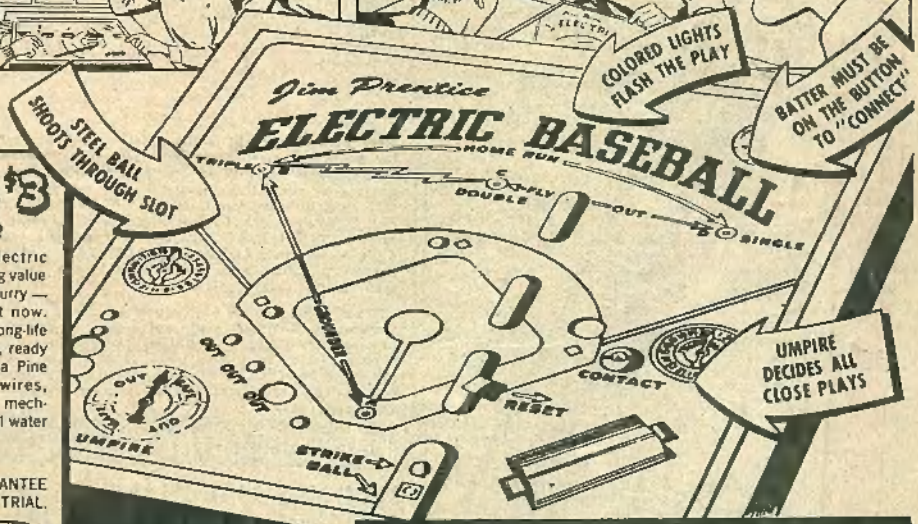

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